PRESSING ALL THE RIGHT BUTTONS

NEW LOOK!

computer and video Games

'EAT RED SHELL, SUCKERS!'

Mario Kart gets tough on Game Boy Advance

FINAL FANTASY BLOW-OUT

First play of FF10, you review the film & its star gets naked

45 NEW SHOTS!

TEKKEN 4

UK Tekken champ gives the king of fighters a right royal pasting

£2.80 • ISSUE 238 • SEPT 09

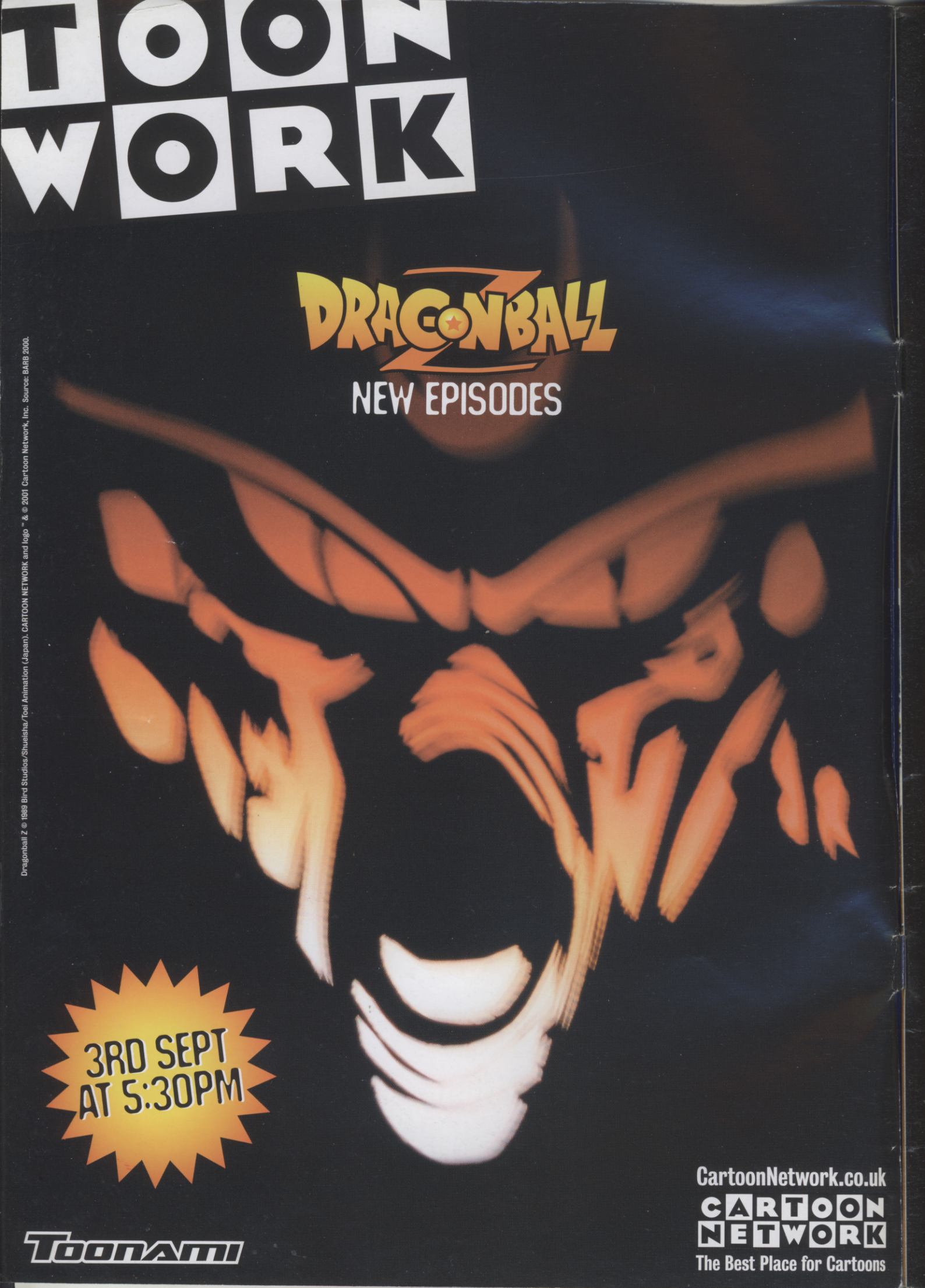
GOING HEAD TO HEAD WITH DEATH

THE ARCADE GAMES THAT CAN KILL YOU

NORKS AS BIG AS YOUR HEAD!

Pin Lara against a wall with this enormous Tomb Raider poster

TOON WORK



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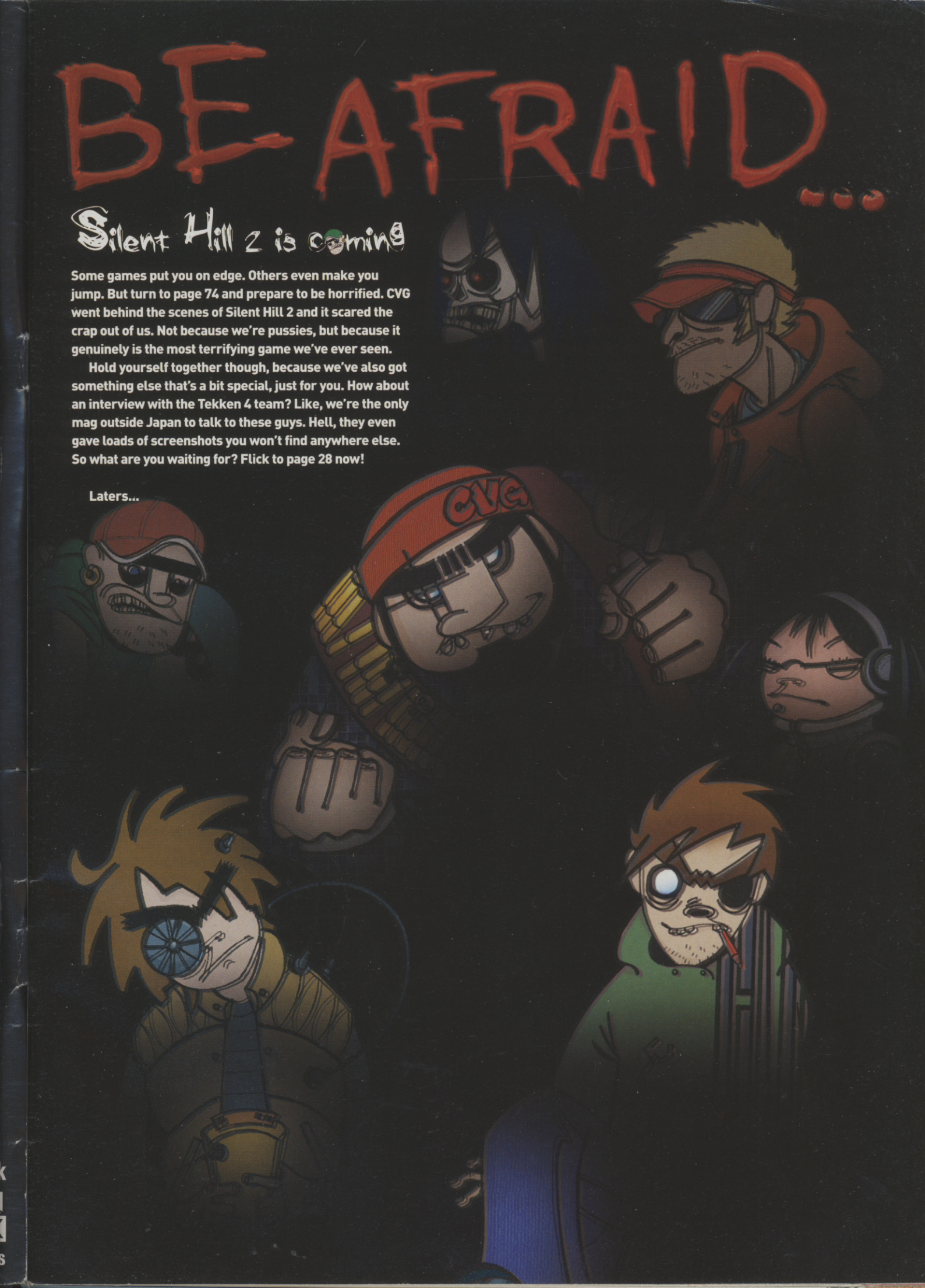
BE AFRAID...

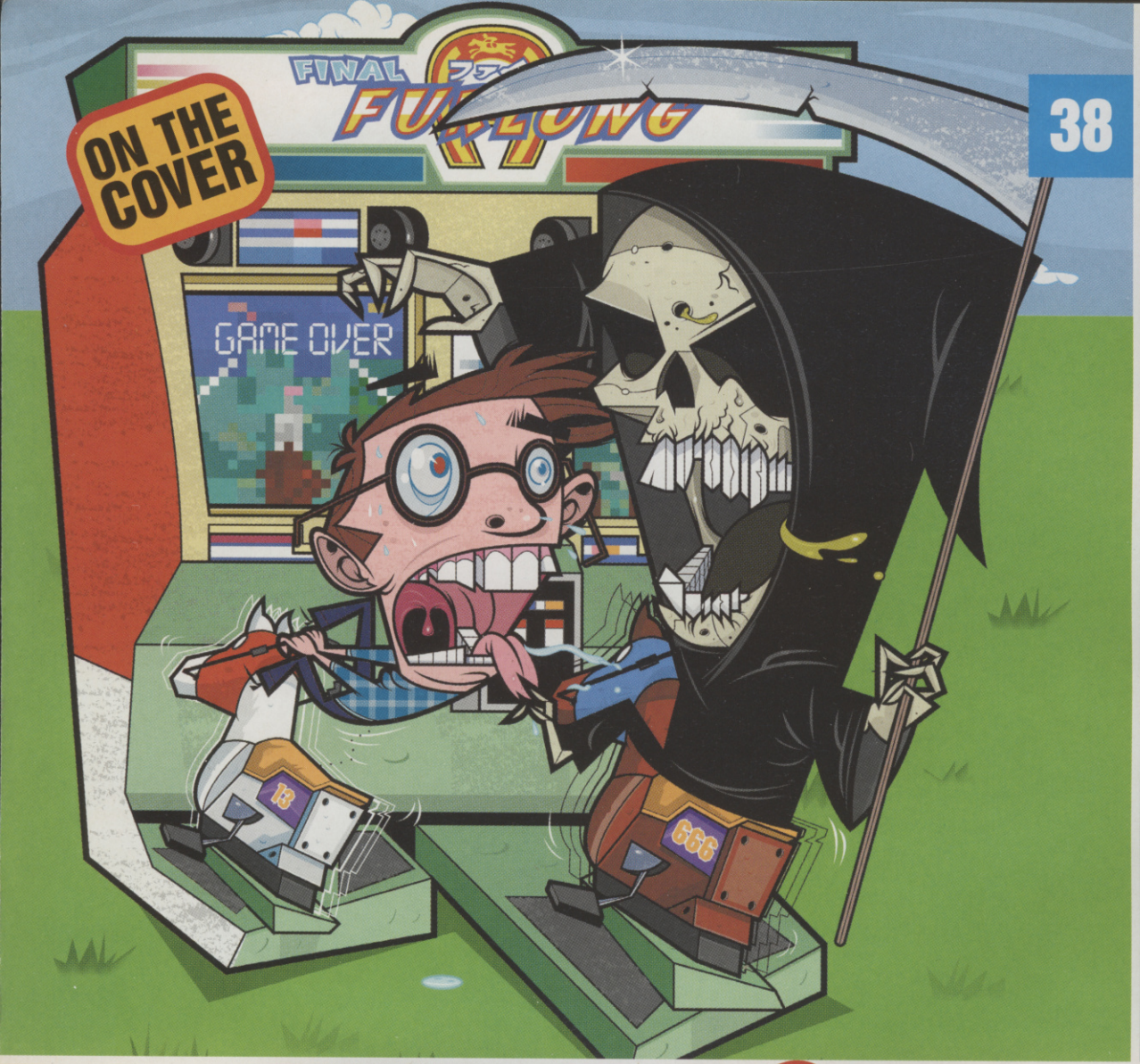
Silent Hill 2 is coming

Some games put you on edge. Others even make you jump. But turn to page 74 and prepare to be horrified. CVG went behind the scenes of Silent Hill 2 and it scared the crap out of us. Not because we're pussies, but because it genuinely is the most terrifying game we've ever seen.

Hold yourself together though, because we've also got something else that's a bit special, just for you. How about an interview with the Tekken 4 team? Like, we're the only mag outside Japan to talk to these guys. Hell, they even gave loads of screenshots you won't find anywhere else. So what are you waiting for? Flick to page 28 now!

Laters...





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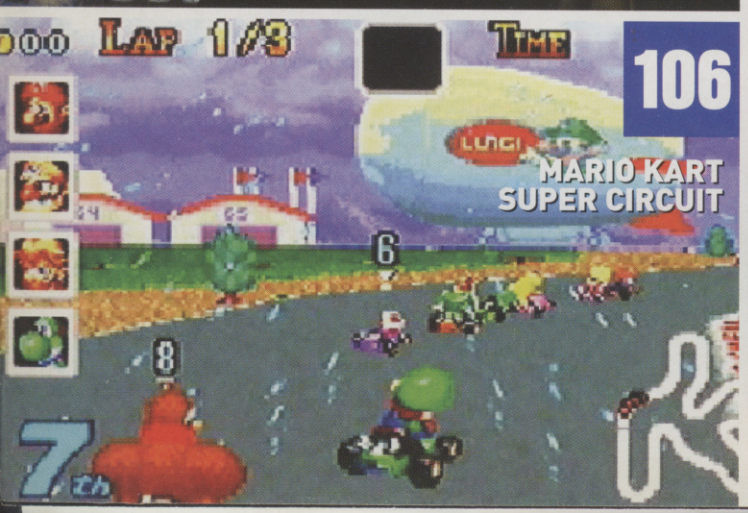

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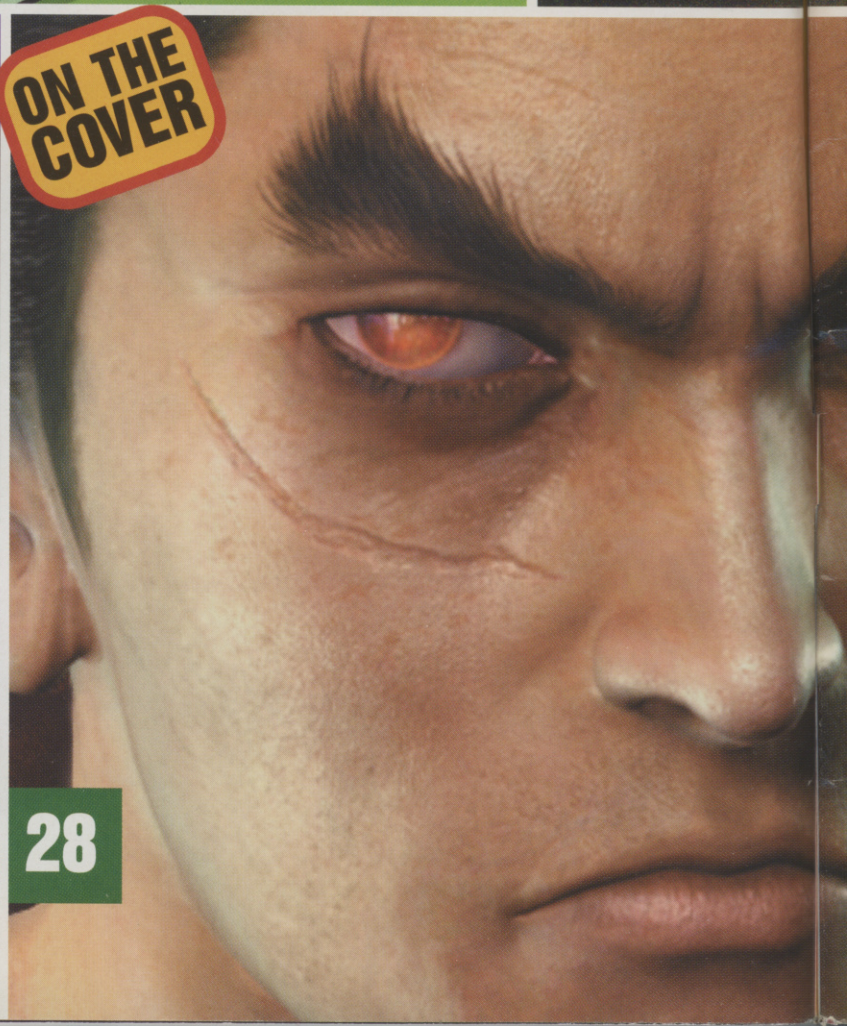

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PLANET CVG

THE HOTTEST GAMES & GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

Sorry, I don't do stairs

Sex-on-a-stick graphics. Now with added blonde!

Men in gas masks. Who's dropped one?

Final Countdown

FINAL FANTASY X IS BIG IN JAPAN

Everything we've seen of Final Fantasy X confirms what we hardly dared hope for – that it's PS2's best-looking game by a mile

Is there chocolate in Chocobos? Dunno, but these guys are looking a mite more destructive than the cute little yellow things we've seen in past FF games

If there's one thing in life you can rely on, it's that Final Fantasy games are going to rule when it comes to stunning graphics.

So you can imagine our wet-palmed excitement at the thought of getting Final Fantasy X for the PS2 – the two seem made for each other. And even after checking out the screenshots and movies floating around, nothing quite prepared us for just how AWESOME this game looks. We expected good things, but this looks amazing.

The facial detail on the characters is amazing

"One cheeseburger meal, please. Sprite with that"

The game opens with some of the best movie scenes we've ever clapped eyes on. Doing away with the slow build-up of previous FF episodes, this sucker sticks you right in the thick of everything as the evil force Sin sweeps across a city. The game's lead characters, Auron and Tidus, get to the centre of the destruction and it's from there that the game really begins.

Looks-wise then, it gets a big, sloppy Grandma kiss from CVG. In gameplay terms, Square hasn't fiddled with the winning formula a great deal. The combat remains virtually unchanged, and although there are improvements, they're hardly earth-shattering. You still have the Limit Break system which allows you to unleash devastating attacks, only this time it's called Over Drive. This means that when your character gets angry enough, all you need to do is complete a series of button presses to activate your mega-attack. And these babies rock! From what we've seen so far, summoning monsters takes pretty much the same format as before, too. So it's really the 'artistic' bits of FFX we're looking at – and they are gorgeous. Not only that, but for the first time Final Fantasy has voice acting, meaning the game is closer than it's ever been to being a movie. Trust us, you are going to want this.

Who's this bald bloke?

AND THERE'S MORE...

Japanese gamers who rushed out and bought the eagerly awaited Final Fantasy X had a pretty cool surprise when their shaking, perspiring hands opened the box. Inside was a class preview demo of no less than Final Fantasy XI!

Yup, a bonus disc with the game showed a trailer from the next FF game, which looks as though it will be the PS2's first online title. It also looks different to FFX, featuring a leafy, lush world that seems more advanced than ever before. It may be at an extremely early stage, but Final Fantasy XI's already lifting our skirts. You'll get more news as soon we gets out mitts on it.

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE

Tarrant In Two-Faced Cloning Storm!

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? asks the packaging innocently enough. But behind this simple query lies a darker truth. What it really wants to know is, "Are you a big, thick spazzer?" Well, are you, punk?

Time to find out, because Who Wants To Be A Millionaire 2nd Edition is due for splashdown in November on PlayStation 2, and apart from testing your exact degree of spazzness, it'll also see a 'virtual' Chris Tarrant asking "Is that your final answer?" over and over again, like Chinese water torture with words. And those who've already bought a WWTBAM game will know this is the virtual Chris' screen debut, so be afraid.

The game's going to be available on PSone and PC, but only in crusty old 2D. You'll need a PS2 for the 3D Chris.

"Project a grid onto my face. Go on, I dare you"

HOW TO CLONE A TARRANT

1. Grab a Tarrant and project a grid onto his face. He won't mind.
2. Take a series of photos as the Tarrant rotates. He'll make a joke to put you at your ease. This is the way of Tarrant.
3. Take 100,000 reference points from the grid to reconstruct his face. Again, Tarrant will not mind.
4. Use 20,000 polygons to construct your finished Tarrant. Hey presto your face-capture technology has worked. Soon, you and your army of Tarrants will rule the world.

D'ya Think He Saw Us?

JURASSIC PARK III

Don't worry mate, dinosaurs only bite if provoked

Jurassic Park games suck. Even if you went out and spent 40 notes on one and felt you just HAD to get your money's worth, you have to admit – it sucked, didn't it?

Jurassic Park III: Survival might suck, but we've got a sneaky feeling it's not going to. For a start it's got a mix of exploration, puzzle-solving and action that we like. Second, the dinosaurs look wicked.

Set on (yet another) secret island, you play a geezer who has to escape dinosaurs and military baddies. Over 12 levels, you'll have a variety of moves and a cool range of weapons and all the dinos under the sun to kill. It sounds promising. But if it does suck, we'll tell you.

"Thank God that thumb bloke's gone"

GT3 guru Kazunori at HMV Oxford Street

Thumbing a lift, or pointing to his fave girl?

Fancy a ride?

PAGE 3 GIRLS AT GT3 LAUNCH

Games companies will do anything to sell a game, but surely the mother of all racers doesn't need half-dressed ladies draped over sports cars to sell it?

Probably not, but if you went down to HMV on Oxford Street, London, on Friday 20 July, you would've copped an eyeful of more than just a great game. These curvy Page 3 Stunnas were there to tempt the public into buying the game, as well as keeping two gameheads cool while they played a monster 24-hour sesh in the shop window. Some people will do anything for a pretty lady, huh?

FINAL FANTASY FILLY IN HER SMALLS

"Hello, boys"

Get this. It's only Aki from the Final Fantasy Movie in her 'most revealing photoshoot yet.' And you won't see this in the movie!

Yep, the geezers at Square either had too much time on their hands, or they'd just finished a mammoth Baywatch sesh and were feeling frisky. Either way, they've decided to stick Aki in a bikini. Respect due, Square geezers.

In fact, Aki's sexy new pose is more likely down to the fact that Square just wanted to show off its flash animation skills. See, Aki's more than just a cartoon. Her and every other character in Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within are 'photo-real' human characters' created using realistic human skin texture maps pasted onto intricate 3D models. The process is boring and takes hours of work, but when the results are this good, we ain't complaining. To get the full effect of this gobsmacking animation though, you'll have to get down to your local fleapit to see Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within.

PS2 MODEM AND HARD DRIVE CONFIRMED FOR THE STATES

Online PS2 for US

Lucky Yanks are to get a taste of what PlayStation 2 can really do when a PS2 modem and hard drive are given an American release in November.

As it stands, the modem set for release in the States is a broadband device with an additional analogue connection which, in plain English, means that our gum-chewing friends over the pond can either use super-fast broadband set-up or rig it up using a standard phone connector – so they can now play their mates at games over the Internet.

In addition, the hard drive – likely to be released at the same time but as a different unit – will mean the PS2 can store data inside the box. Just imagine, that means no more having to change discs on Final Fantasy and GranTurismo – the games could simply install themselves to the machine's hard drive.

But the real power of the machine becomes apparent when you combine modem and hard drive. Thanks to a deal Sony has done with Net wizards AOL, PS2 users will have access to instant messaging, email and chat as well as Internet access through a Netscape browser. The possibilities are endless, but check our panel for some of the most immediate ones.

Now the bad news. There's no word on how soon (or even whether or not) us Brits can join the burger-chomping baseball fiends in their PS2 fun. It's generally considered that the UK is lagging far behind Japan and the States when it comes to our phone lines, and most people here don't have the broadband connection the modem needs. Still, we'll see.

WHAT ALL THIS MEANS TO THE AVERAGE JOE

With the modem and hard drive, you'll be able to do this lot...

1. Play mates over the Net – imagine, Deathmatch Quake!
2. Download new levels and characters for your games
3. Access new games you can simply download to your hard drive
4. Connect with other stuff, like camcorders and digital cameras
5. Download music and films
6. Improve your haircut, complexion and confidence with members of the opposite sex

This blue man makes his Quake 4 debut

These guys look like they mean business

RUMOURS. GOSSIP. GRAPEVINE

Quake 4 secrets!

By the time you read this article, we're expecting to have heard a concrete announcement on Quake 4. The word on the street is that the game is being developed for the Xbox as well as PC but won't be coded by iD Software, which has taken care of business for the first three Quake games.

Right now, all we know for sure is there's almost certainly going to be another Quake game, and it's likely to be handled by Raven, the developers behind Solider Of Fortune.

Now here's a bit of hot news straight off the press. It's reached our ears that a certain superhero movie licence has been acquired as a TOP SECRET comic-style role-playing game is in development. We know nothing else, apart from to say that if the rumour's true, this game should make a very good RPG indeed. Keep guessing!

WHO'S THAT GIRL?

Foxy Lady

Meet Hannah Heber, who plays the topless blue girl in Giant: Citizen Kaubto. CVG has finally tracked down the inspiration for Adelphi and asked her a few questions.

How did you become Adelphi?

"My brother, Tim, is the creative director at Planet Moon, so I was often around the office visiting him. I guess I just rubbed off on the artists... Hang on, that sounds a bit weird!"

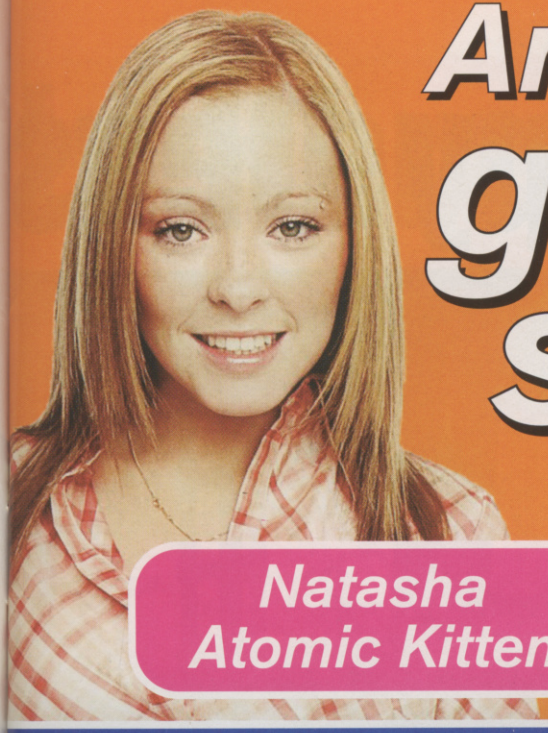
Are you flattered with your virtual self? How could they have made any improvements?

"Well, not make me blue for starters! I'd probably wear some more clothes myself, but then again that would probably take away from her character."

What's it like being the lust object for thousands of gameheads?

"It's fine, I'm sure most people don't realise the connection. I am flattered by the attention. Just as long as they don't come knocking on my door, or I'll set the dogs on them!"

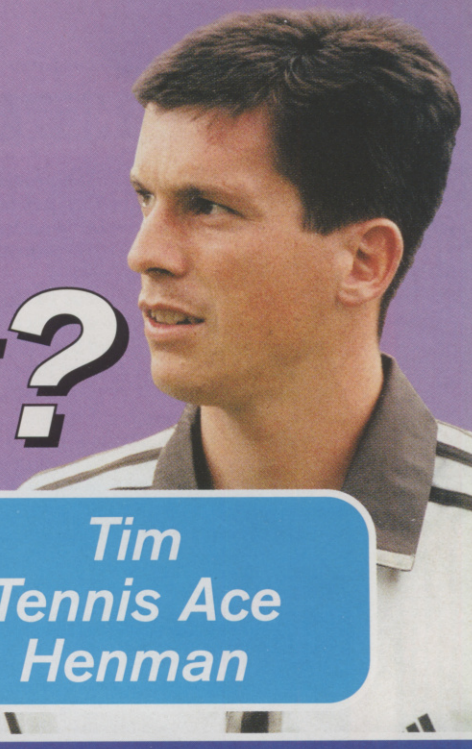
Are you a good sport?



Natasha
Atomic Kitten

Vs.

Tim
Tennis Ace
Henman



WE PUT EVERYONE'S FAVE FLAME-HAIRED POPSTREL AND THE COUNTRY'S TOP TENNIS PLAYER ON THE SPOT - BUT WHICH ONE WOULD YOU WANT ON YOUR TEAM? GET READY FOR SOME NAIL-BITING CHOICES!

1 If you lost a game, would you shake the other team's hands?

Natasha There's nothing worse than a sore loser acting like it's the end of the world. I'd shake hands even if I was gutted.

Tim Yes, of course, I would always shake hands.

2 If you could cheat without anyone finding out, would you do it?

Natasha It could be really tempting but I wouldn't do it (honest guv!) because I'd want to know that I'd achieved something with all my own efforts - fair and square.

Tim No, I am not into cheating and no one should ever be.

3 If you could pay £5 to be on the school team, would you do it?

Natasha They should be paying me to play on the team! Ha! Ha! Ha! Seriously though I'd just feel a fake if I had to pay my way onto a team.

Tim No I wouldn't as I like to earn my place and if I wasn't good enough to be on the team then I shouldn't be on the team.

4 If you saw someone being bullied, would you grass the bully up?

Natasha Without a doubt! I don't see that as grassing someone up - bullies are well out of order for making people's lives a misery. I would always do something about it.

Tim Definitely. It's better to make sure that kind of thing doesn't happen again than let it go on.

WE SAY **Sometimes the choices you make can be as important as the result! Fruit Shoot is a new way of drinking for a new way of thinking – but how differently do YOU think? You've heard their answers – who do you think wins game, set and match?!**

Fruit Shoot is a refreshing fruit drink from Robinsons, available in two fantastic flavours!

New Thinking – New Drinking.

DEUS EX 2 NEW INFO

Happy Deus

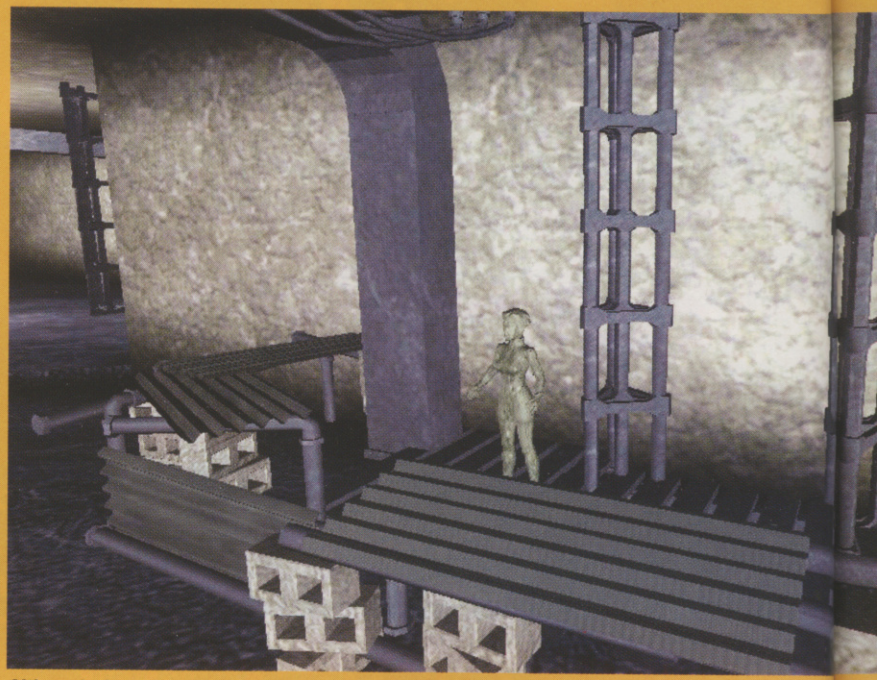
Those of you out there who own both a PC and a working brain will already be very familiar with the dark, brooding, conspiracy-packed world of Deus Ex – a game that was part-thriller, part-action and all awesome.

The good news is that Deus Ex 2 is on the cards, and it'll be using an updated version of the same Unreal engine that powered the first one – Unreal Warfare in this case. But by far the most significant development promises to be the improved AI of the peripheral characters in the game.

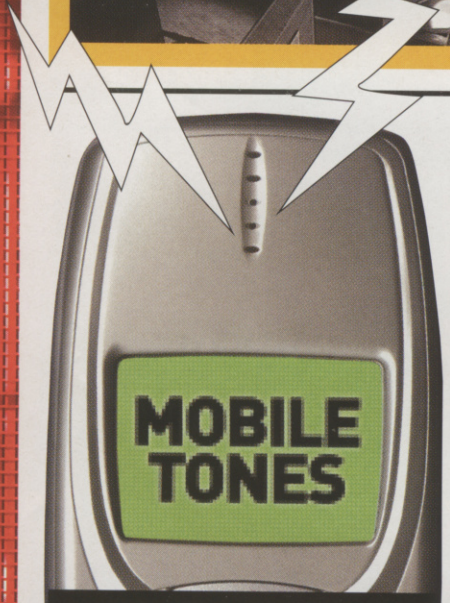
In the first game, part of the attraction was the variety of ways you could play – either by chatting to NPCs (that's 'non-playing characters' to you, dude), by sneaking around, or by full-throttle attack.

For the sequel, this aspect looks likely to be cranked up a notch or two – and it's all thanks to the

Deus Ex – the game that's cleverer than you are



Olt's early doors but the models are starting to look mighty fine. It's the AI that's really gonna be h thou



THIS MONTH: THEME FROM METAL GEAR SOLID 2

CVG's phone king Johnny Minkley plucks another ring-tone classic from the videogame ether, just for you.

4E2 4D2 2C2 8- 8D2 8E2 8C2
4E2 2D2 8C2 8D2 2E2 8- 8A2
8G2 8E2 4C2 2D2 8E2 8A2
2C3 8- 8B2 8C3 8D3 4C3 2A2
8G2 8A2 4.B2 8C3 4B2 8A2
8G2 2A2

Tempo: 125. You must have a Nokia phone with Composer to make it work!

DEVIL MAY CRY – NEW SHOTS FOR PS2

Our parents once taught us not to judge on looks alone. "A sense of humour's much more important," they said. Shaddup! Just check out these new shots. Devil May Cry for PS2 looks the dog's. And as for a sense of humour – you play a guy called Dante who wanders around a spooky castle bagging demons. Laughs? We don't think so.

Devil May Cry comes from the lads at Capcom, and, with the excellent Resident Evil series and Onimusha tucked safely under their belts already, these boys should know a thing or two about creating

Nice place but it must cost a fortune to heat a gaff this size

Slash, Bang,

Foot and mouth does strange things to videogame cows...

...and the only way to deal with them is to unceremoniously slaughter the dumb beasts

s Is Here Again

e hot though

HOW MACHINES WILL TAKE OVER THE WORLD

CVG's Global Disaster Crystal Ball

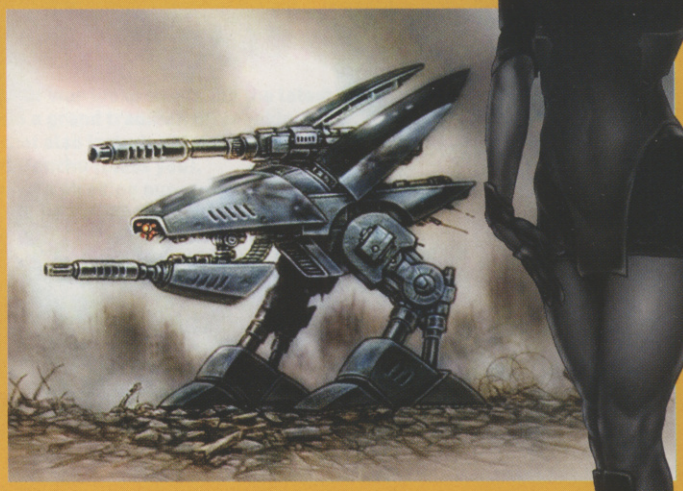
2002: Deus Ex 2 comes out. We all go, "It's really lifelike. The AI is class."

2004: Deus Ex 4 has even better AI. Characters begin to do stuff when you're not around, including climbing out of the game and wandering around your PC's hard drive, sending 'funny' emails to your girlfriend.

2005: The same game character who split you and your bird up makes friends with another guy on another machine. They hatch a plan to take over the world, first ordering loads of CDs from Amazon.com "for a laugh".

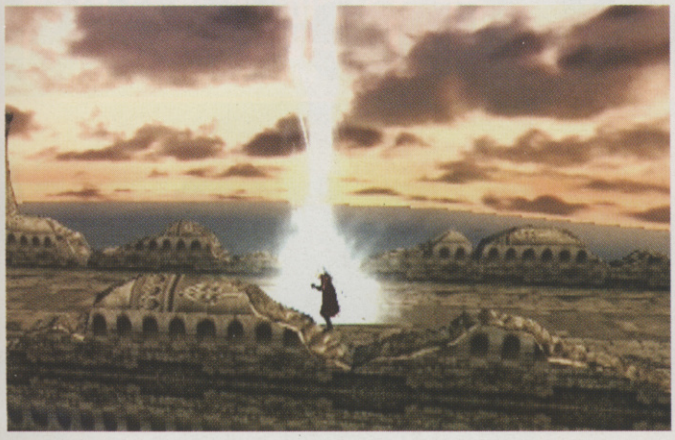
2007: They mosey on over to the Pentagon's network and casually hold the world to ransom by pointing nuclear weapons at Mariah Carey.

2008: We're all batteries, helping to power machines. Just like The Matrix.



beefed-up AI. The blokes in white coats behind the game reckon this time NPC responses will be a lot less 'hard-coded' than before, making for an EVEN MORE believable experience.

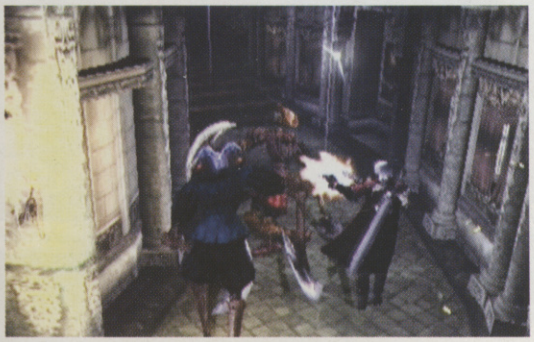
Apart from these little snippets, details surrounding the sequel are top secret, so if you wanna know more about Deus Ex 2, you'd better keep your eyes on CVG over the next few months.



You'd consider yourself lucky if lightning struck this close to you

"I was looking out the window when some chicken-legged freak jumped me!"

Wallop



Swords are good but double pistols are far better

atmospheric, scary horror games. This should be no different, but there's already loads of extra goodies that have caught our eye. Dante's weapons, for example. He has a huge sword AND a pair of pistols which he wields in a cool, two-handed John Woo stylee. There's also a shotgun in there somewhere, and when you see him reload it one-handed, you're gonna be in gun heaven.

The monsters Dante faces look ace, too. A huge spider boss scared the bejesus out of us, and elsewhere there are huge, hovering wraiths and even puppet demons – all of which Dante needs to kill in order to grab their souls to add to his collection.

This game looks like being one of PS2's best, and we've got our fingers and toes crossed for a release sometime before Christmas.

Spot the Dan

We've slapped a pic of Dan's mug somewhere in the mag. Can you find it? First to write in wins a prize.

Last month Dan was rocking the hoop

ALL-NEW TIMESPLITTERS 2 SHOTS

What's the time? Time to die!

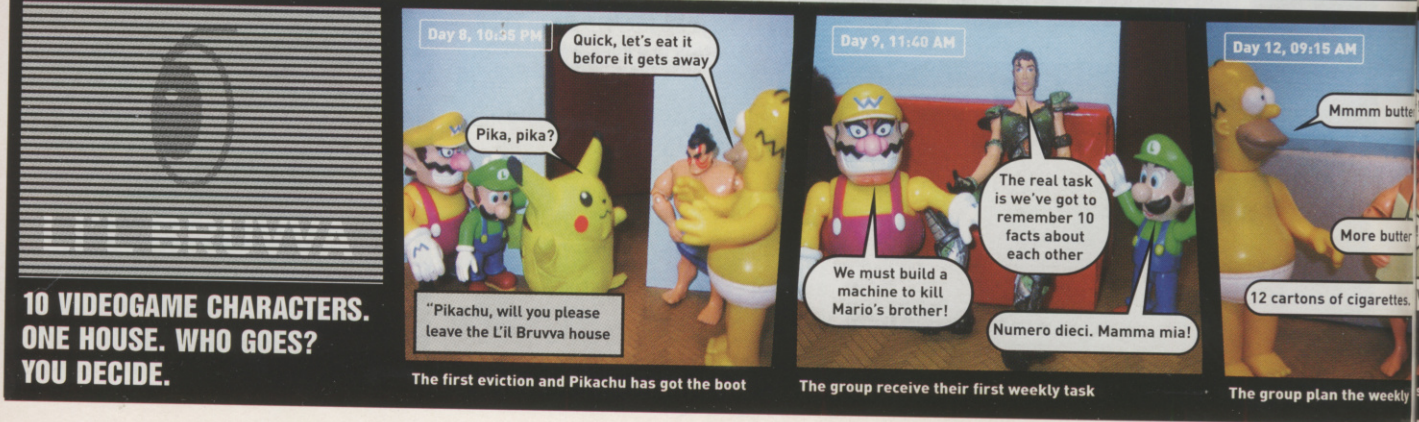
TimeSplitters rocked in multiplayer, but was not so good in single-player - that was what everybody (OK, us) thought when Eidos unleashed its PS2 answer to GoldenEye.

But what's this? Grandma, fetch me eyedrops, it seems the multimedia massive over at developers Free Radical have got their heads around a cool single-player experience for the sequel AND they've gone and beefed up the multiplayer too. Clever boys.

As you can see from these shots, the graphics are looking well tasty. We particularly like the snow effects on the levels shown here - the 'snow falling' effect is excellent, believe us. Incidentally, there will be tons more levels and missions in the sequel and a lot more emphasis on the storyline. All the first-person shooting stuff you like will be present and correct though, so don't go worrying your pretty little head about that. More info when we get it.

"Take your shot – and make it a good one"

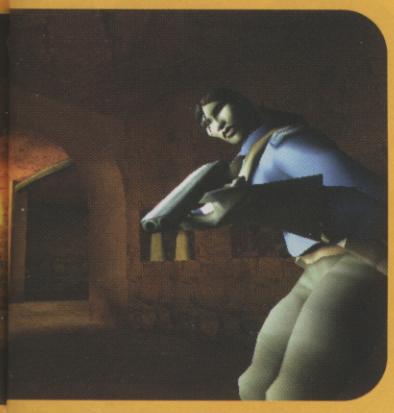
More tme travel action in TimeSplitters, but fo the sequel we get better multiplayer and tastier graphics. It's gonna rock



The first eviction and Pikachu has got the boot

The group receive their first weekly task

The group plan the weekly



Don't mess with the gold prospectors

They have better guns, but they're still irate

WHY THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS TIME TRAVEL

It will never exist – here's why

1. If a time machine was invented, you'd use it to go forward in time and buy a much more advanced time machine...
2. Then you'd go back in time and invent time travel earlier...
3. And do you see any top-of-the-range 'time machines' parked on the street? Any time travellers wandering around?
4. That's why time travel will never happen, according to the gospel of CVG. Next month: Why aliens don't bother making crop circles.

ARTIFICIAL LIFE SYSTEM UNVEILED

POW-WOW

Prisoner Of War looks like being the latest entry into a grand tradition of 'sneaking' games that also includes Metal Gear Solid and t-t-t-Tenchu (bless you).

But what's stroking our strides about this one is something called an 'Artificial Life System' in the game, which creates natural movement and thought in all characters.

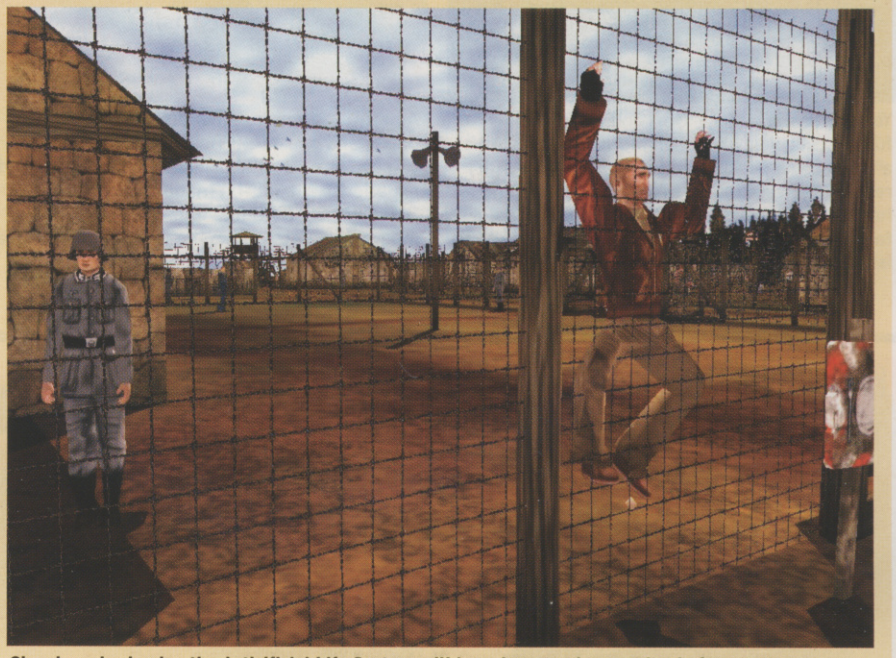
The game – being developed for PlayStation 2 and PC – involves trying to jump the fence of a 1941 prison camp. Doing it means getting to know the people in the camp, sussing out who will help you and who'll grass you up, before making your escape attempts. And having the A-Life engine means that the characters you chinwag with will be able to react to you in a much more believable way then ever before. Honest, injun.

"Our characters are autonomous agents," trumpets Codemasters' Alastair Halsby, "They sense many independent variables and come up with different, intelligent solutions to an ever-changing world, while reacting to each other as well."

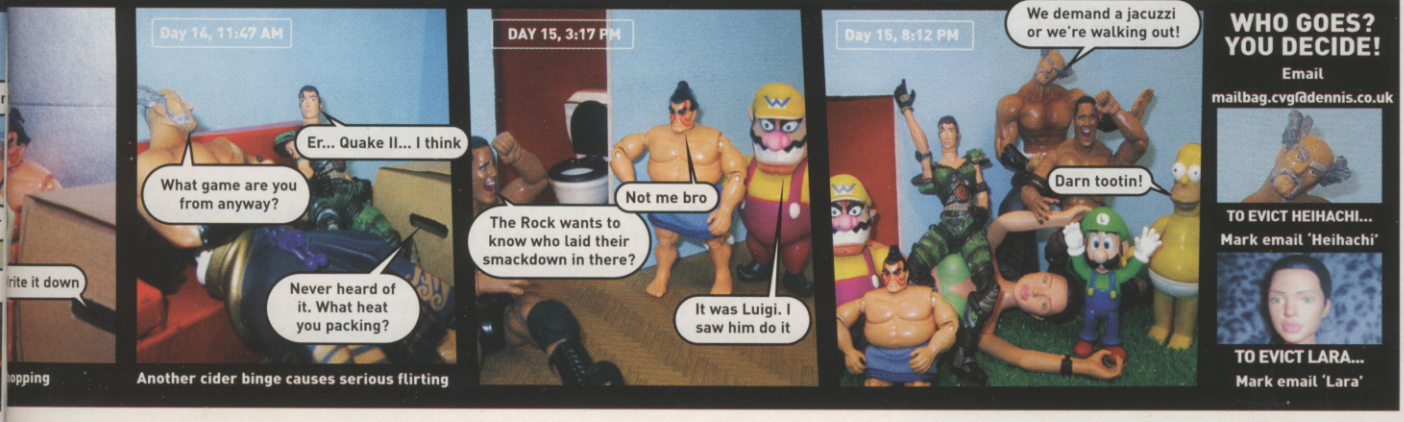
That's that expalioned then. So what he means is no more blokes trotting out the same, scripted line ad infinitum, then walking into a wall? We hopes so.

Prisoner Of War gets a release sometime in early 2002. More news as we get it.

"Keep your chins up, lads. Jerry's watching"



Clearly we're hoping the Articificial Life System will have improved somewhat before next year

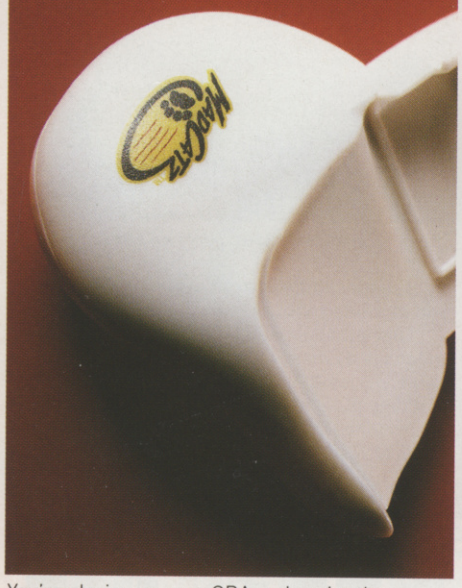


Another cider binge causes serious flirting

Crash Test

BATTERY GRIP

By: Mad Catz
Cost: £14.99



You're playing on your GBA and you're the furthest you've ever got on Mario Advance. All of a sudden the peaceful green light turns a scary red. It's battery change time, but there's none to hand! Use this battery pack and power adaptor to avoid such handheld disasters. Only drawback is that it's huge and really quite heavy.

★★★★★★★★★★

SHARP SHOOTER PRO

By: Joytech
Cost: £12.99

A natty new lightgun to match the PS2's black finish, and while PS2 Time Crisis is a way off, you can still play the original Crisis games and experience the full-on madness of the Point Blank series. It's a fine gun, but hardly innovative. It also lacks the laser sight of Blaze's Scorpion guns and feels a bit hollow.

★★★★★★★★★★

USB SCROLL MOUSE

By: Joytech
Cost: £12.99

Clearly useless if all you play are racing games and fighters, but this USB mouse will keep point and clickers happy – especially with Age of Empires II coming out soon. The mouse is lightweight but has a solid feel, and the central mouse wheel has just the right amount of resistance. Very nice indeed.

★★★★★★★★★★

Developer Top Trumps

COLLECT THE SET!
Number #1 Shigeru Miyamato

Miyamato is the head designer at Nintendo, has Donkey Kong, Mario 64 and Zelda 64 under his belt and is known as the Spielberg of games.

TONGUE-TWISTING NAME Are you Japanese. As you're probably not...	70
WORTH Two packets of Balti-flavoured crisps	80
PAST HITS His games have made Nintendo what it is	99
STAYING POWER He boshed out Donkey Kong back in 1981	91
GEEK OR GOOD LAD? A quiet family geezer. No parties for him	43
FUTURE POTENTIAL The man's still at the helm at Nintendo, so...	90

BE A WINNER WITH THESE HARRY PO

Harry Potter™

Don't be a total loser, Hogwart!

Can't wait to see the movie in November? All excited about Harry Potter but you've already read the novels? Well give you're thrill glands a kick with these cool Harry Potter trading card packs, thanks to Wizards Of The Coast. So all you budding wizards out there can sleep soundly.

We've got a whole load of tip-top prizes on offer, from complete starter kits that'll let all you novices get playing straight away, to runners-up booster pack prizes so you can expand your spell list and monster line-up. So stop dribbling and take a look at what we've got up for grabs...

THE LATEST PADS AND PERIPHERALS ARE GIVEN THE CVG ONCE-OVER

16MB MEMORY STATION

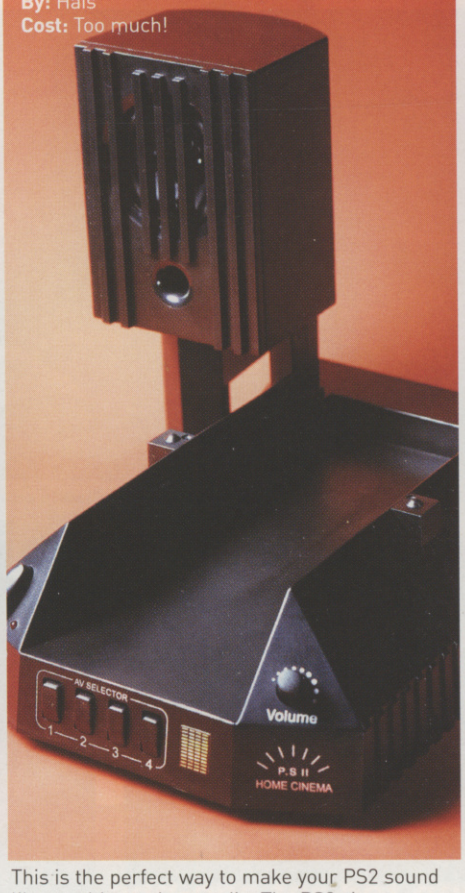
By: Joytech
Cost: £29.99

PS2 memory cards cost more than some people earn in a year. So this gizmo is a top idea. Plug your existing PS2 card into the adaptor and it effectively triples the amount of space available. You'll need the official card though. Great idea, but the connections on our test unit were a bit loose and we lost some data.

★★★★★★★★★★

PS2 HOME CINEMA

By: Hais
Cost: Too much!

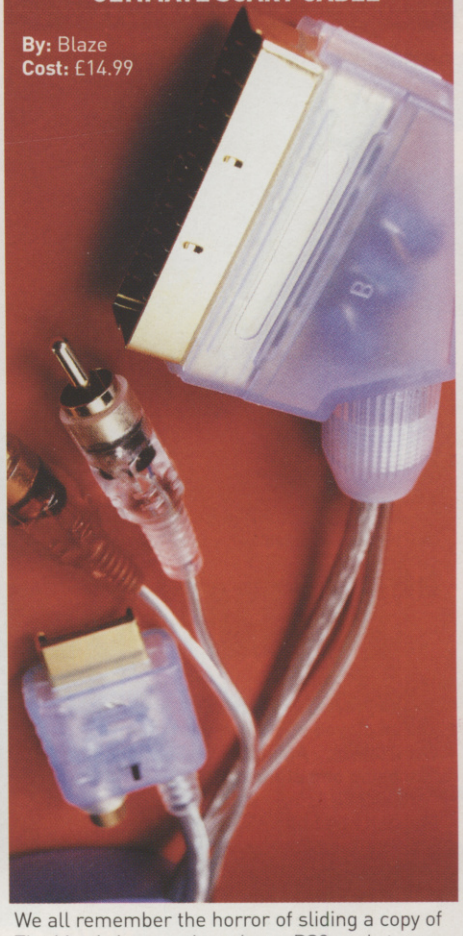


This is the perfect way to make your PS2 sound like an old transistor radio. The PS2 sits vertically in the amplifier unit with tiny, tinny speakers attached to the sides. There's no bass oomph at all and the whole thing has about as much style as a Bontempi organ circa 1983. Your TV speakers sound better than this.

★★★★★★★★★★

ULTIMATE SCART CABLE

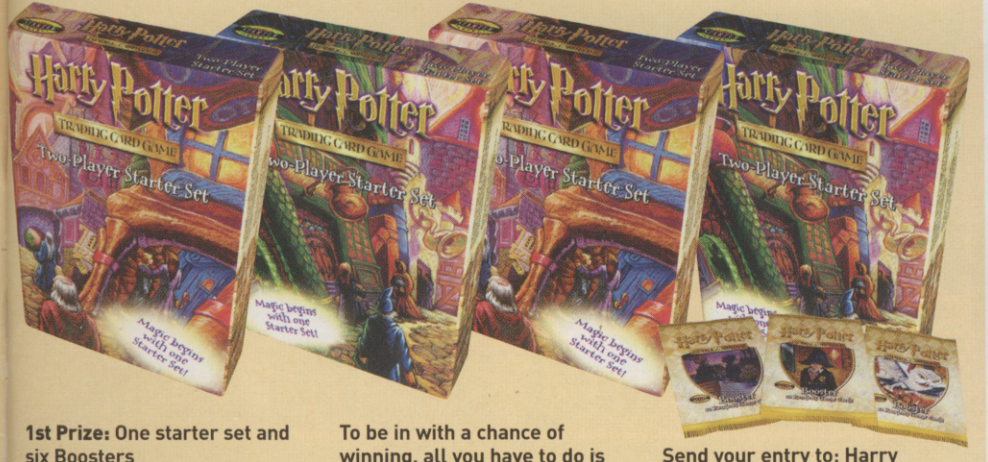
By: Blaze
Cost: £14.99



We all remember the horror of sliding a copy of The Matrix into our brand new PS2s only to see Keanu's mug tinged with green. This cable fixes the PS2's signal incompatibility issues. It has two separate signal outputs, so you can change between games and DVDs with the flick of a switch. Has phono leads too for stereo joy!

★★★★★★★★★★

O TTER TRADING CARD PRIZES



1st Prize: One starter set and six Boosters
2nd prize: One starter set and three Boosters
3rd prize: One starter set and one Booster

10 runner-up prizes of one Booster each.

To be in with a chance of winning, all you have to do is answer the following question:

Q: What house does Harry Potter belong to?
1: Gun Griffon
2: Gryffindor
3: Bungalow

Send your entry to: Harry Potter Compo, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. Make sure your entry reaches us by 20 September 2001. Remember, the Editor's Decision is final.

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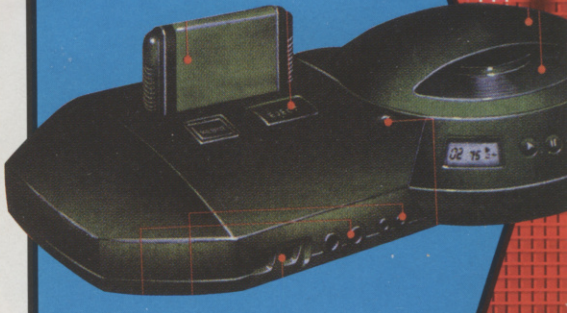
What's this console?



Look back over the history of games and you'll find tons of artist's impressions of what future consoles were supposed to look like. Only most of them resembled the actual machines that got released as Geri Halliwell resembles a talented singer/songwriter. So here's another one of those incredibly inacurate predictions – what was this meant to be?

PS2: 007 UNDER FIRE

You're not a Russian spy, you're a – wait for it – 'rushing' spy

That'll be the Q-Claw in action then. Or is it Bond doing a spazzy hand-clap?

"Now pay my pension, 007"

You've played some good Bond games, you've played some bad ones. James Bond 007 in... Agent Under Fire looks like being one of the good ones.

Why? Well, for a start, developer EA hasn't tied this PS2 title to an existing Bond film, so – like a bird – it's free to go wherever it wants. Secondly, it's a mix of first-person shooter (bit of stealth, bit of charging around) and racer. Sounds cool.

What else? Um, Bond has a cool new gadget called the Q-Claw, which allows him to scale buildings like in Tenchu. Plus he'll have heaps of other weapons like a handgun with silencer, machine-gun, rocket launcher and a sniper rifle.

Get the chopper before it gets you

For the racing, Bond will be able to drive a BMW Z8 and BMW 750, and the Aston Martin should be in there too.

All in all, this one's shaping up to be a doozy. We'll let ya know...

Lady in the shower. Careful, Bond, she could be a man!

Get it right?

Well, at least the shape was similar. It's the Wondermega from JVC (known as Victor Musical Industries in Japan), incorporating both the Mega Drive and the Mega-CD. It even boasted a built-in karaoke machine. Sadly, it never made it past Japanese customs except on import. Sigh.

CROSS-PLATFORM HORROR ACTION

Scary, horrific, trouser-browning title logo

Scary, horrific, trouser-browning shed

Thing-a-ling-a-ding-dong

Just one shot and a logo – that's yer lot for The Thing. But if we tell you that it's a tie-in with the wicked John Carpenter horror film starring Kurt Russell, and that it continues the story where the film left off, and that it comes from Konami, the good people who brought you Metal Gear Solid, you're going to be just as excited as we are, right? Thought so.

You should expect deep, bowel-emptying horror. Expect men changing into horrible monsters before your very eyes – maybe even dogs peeling themselves like over-ripe bananas – and expect lots and lots of blood and gore. Nice.

What's more, nobody with an up-to-date machine is going to miss out on the blood-soaked action. Even though the shot here is from the PC version, the game's being developed for PS2, Xbox, Gamecube, and Game Boy Advance. Oh yes.

Advanced Accessories

Cool add-ons for hot game-play on your Game Boy Advance

Got a Game Boy Advance? Now you can get power, protection and extra performance with these killer new accessories from Gamester!

Check out the Power Station. This handy desktop unit packs up to twelve hours of game play into a single charge. Want to play in the dark? Then snap on the Floodlights. Twin lamps at just the right angle give out all the light you need, then fold flat for storage. And when it's time to close down the action, the rugged Kit Bag provides stylish protection for your Game Boy Advance.

Stay ahead of the game.
Shoot off to your nearest games retailer or visit

www.radicauk.com

GAMESTER®

THE UNFAIR ADVANTAGE

CACKMAN

If it's a load of dump, he's hot on its brown trail...

GBA: IMPERFECT DARK

Game Boy Advance is truly a ground-breaking machine. Did you know it's able to generate 32,768 simultaneous colours on screen? Problem is, they're all black. See, the screen is so damn dark you can't see a bloody thing.

Have you played one yet? If so, it would need to have been between 11am and 3pm, outdoors on a cloudless day without your shadow blocking the sun, and the machine carefully angled away from your face. Otherwise you'd just look up your own nostrils.

No offence, the games are awesome. Probably the most exciting around. But it's so dark, the cars in F-Zero: Maximum Velocity shouldn't be allowed on the road without proper headlamps. Forget turnips, Mario should keep pulling up carrots, just to help his eyesight. And I was loathe to smash the candelabras in Castlevania, 'cos it's already so hard to see, I was worried Dracula would fall and injure himself.

The feeble excuse for no backlight is down to battery-power, say the presumably bug-eyed, nocturnal rodent scientists holed-up at Nintendo. Purlease! Who are they trying to kid? Sega's Game Gear had perfect illumination ten years ago. And if replacing batteries really is a problem, why not have a built-in rechargeable battery pack like all mobile phones have?

There is a good flipside to all this. The image of pasty, translucent-skinned gamers who've never seen the light of day will soon be replaced by a deeply tanned GBA generation. With massive unblinking eyes and a Vitamin A-rich diet. Although it's more likely we'll just go out and buy those cumbersome light adaptors that look like teeth braces or a bendy blue whale's knob.

BOTTOM TEN STINKIEST GAMES

Calling all Cack-fans out there! Is there a game coming that you reckon is going to stink all the way to high heaven? The Cackman is starting his own 'Most Unwanted' log and needs you to sniff out the crap. Send your list to 'Cackman's Bottom Ten', Computer & Video Games, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. In the meantime, here are three complete dog eggs to get your bowels moving...

CAPCOM VS SNK 2 (PS2)
Controversial, I know... but come on, Capcom knock out a new Street Fighter variation every other month. They're. Ripping. You. Off!

SPYRO ADVANCE (GBA)
A game character that's possibly even more of a knob than Rayman? No coincidence that he's purple. Bet he has a skin-coloured roll-neck sweater too.

NECROCIDE: THE DEAD MUST DIE (PC)
Don't know anything about this actually. But if that isn't the crappiest name for a game I've ever seen! It deserves a nomination just for that.

FAMOUS FAECES

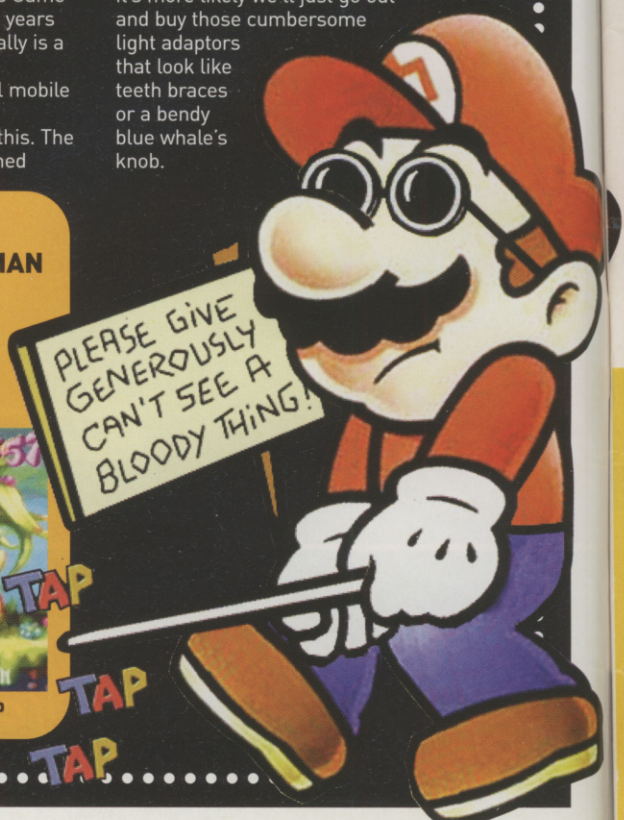
VIDEOGAMING'S STINKIEST CELEBRITIES. NO.1: RAYMAN

It's not the done thing to mock people without arms and legs, but since Rayman has floating, fully operational hands and feet, it's probably okay. We're not knocking his games. He's had an excellent 3D adventure and his GBA game is one of the machine's best, erm, looking.

But c'mon, his gimmick is no limbs. Why? Quite simply because in the Mega Drive days it was easier to animate this 'Happy Shopper' platform character without them, and someone somewhere obviously thought that looked cool. Maybe Mario shouldn't have any eyes then, just like in original Donkey Kong? So, whatever happened to those missing limbs?

Well, Rayman is French, so most likely they've been fried up in lashings of garlic butter and served with a crusty baguette and a slice of fromage. Yum.

Rayman: no arms and legs. And crap



This shot has all the atmosphere of a high-octane Hollywood movie. Burn-Out should rock

It's better to Burn-Out than fade away

NAME CHANGE FOR PS2 SMASH 'EM UP

Torque-shattering PS2 racer SRC has a new name. From now on, the artist formerly known as SRC will be called Burn-Out.

This is music to our ears, because SRC stood for Shiny Red Car, and doesn't quite get to grips with describing what the game's about – which is speed. Yes, this is the fastest, most blinging racer yet seen. You tear along busy traffic-filled roads at eye-watering speeds before picking up speed boosts and then crashing as the road turns into a grey streak of G-force before your very eyes.

And when you crash? This baby has some of the best car-crunching we've ever seen, with the option to replay really spectacular crashes and even save them to a memory card to impress the girls with at a later date.

Blur your eyes to view this shot. That way you'll get a feel for the sheer speed of the game

WTA TOUR PICS

Girls serve up an ace

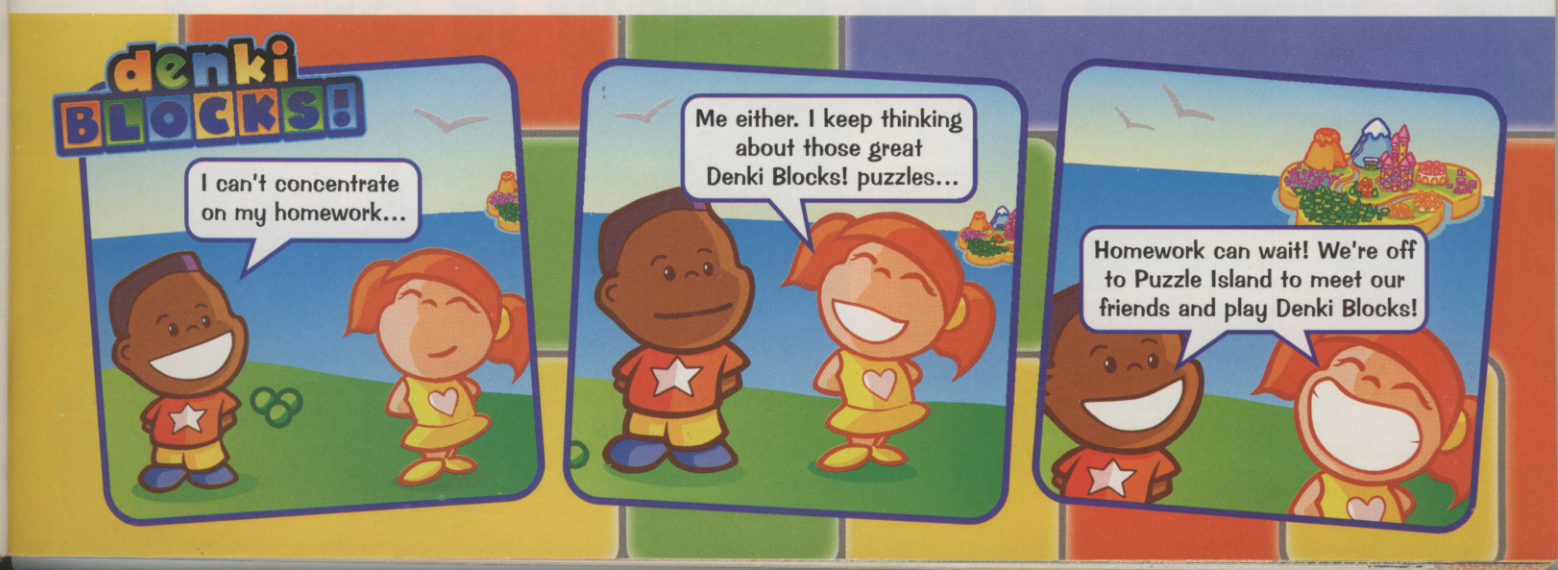
Poor old WTA Tennis Tour. Just as soon as the boys at Konami announced that their PlayStation2 answer to Sega's Virtua Tennis was going to feature – gasp! – women, Virtua Tennis 2 gets in on the act as well. "We're going to have women, too!" they crowed, showing their bums to rub salt into the wound.

Still, WTA Tour Tennis at least looks like being the only tennis game *on PlayStation 2* to feature women, so that counts for something, right?

And they have snaffled Martina Hingis, Lindsey Davenport, Monica Seles, Ai Sugiyama and Serena Williams to appear in all their swishy-skirted glory. So that can't be bad either. Elsewhere all the usual aces, lobbing, love-all, second service, double-fault fun is going to be there. But is this going to have the virtue of a Virtua? We think no-no, gringo.

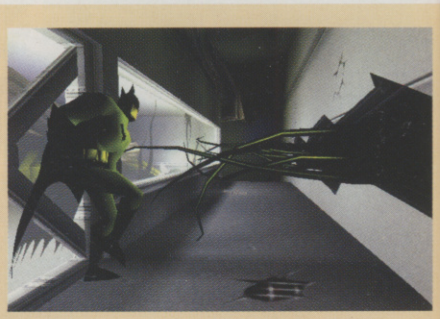
Look, ma! A woman. Playing tennis!

Can Konami cane Virtua? We'll see...



CAPE CARNIVAL: BATMAN FOR PS2

Gotham's looking as atmospheric as ever in this shot



Tendril-loving care for the inquisitive Batman

Fool, never turn your back on a burning car

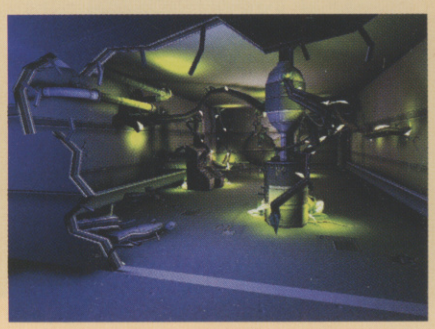
Batman in 3D

Thoughts of a Batman game in 3D keeping you awake at night? Well fluff up that pillow and get ready for beddy-byes, because the nice lads at Ubi Soft have finally dragged the caped crusader into three dimensions, and he's looking like a right PS2 cracker.

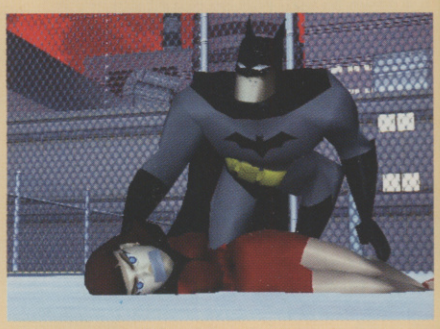
Based on the TV cartoon series, The New Batman Adventures, Batman: Vengeance sees our hero facing off against a whole host of familiar crims – The Joker, Poison Ivy, Mr Freeze, Harley Quinn and the rest. All that and Mark Hamill (that's Luke Skywalker to you) will be providing the voice of The Joker just as he does in the TV series. Sounds good.

The game's split into five episodes and 19 playable maps, which you have to explore to collect clues and foil what is certain to be a most dastardly plot. Each episode begins with FMV and, by the look of these screens, they look almost identical to the TV show.

But looks without gameplay is nothing, right? So we'll hold fire on giving a verdict until we've seen more. Batman will have plenty of martial arts moves and the normal array of gadgets at his disposal, so hopefully that side of things will be sweet too.



Looks like a cartoon, plays like a game. Wicked



Batgeezer needs to solve clues to progress

"Crash! A-ha! Saviour of the universe!"

PS2 DEBUT REVEALED

They're busy bringing Crash to the PS2 for his debut adventure on the machine – Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath Of Cortex. There will be some new vehicles in the game, and a ball that Crash can roll around in, but from the looks of the screenshots we've got hold of, they don't have any other radical overhauls planned. So brace yourself for more apple-collecting, box-bashing high jinks, only in a cool PS2 stylee.

Crash gets an Aliens-style hydraulic suit

Batman throws down a few breakdancing moves before getting down to the fighting stuff

Um, the city. At night

Batman: now with wings

Geri Halliwell: surprised

BATMAN? NORMALLY WACK, MAN

Batman: Vengeance looks mint, but the Bat-dude's games are usually gash. Let's have a look at them...

BATMAN & ROBIN
ON: PSONE
This is: An action/adventure title off the back of the worst Batman film ever made. This game was boring, confusing, had too many control systems and smelt strongly of old man's wee.
Recommended punishment: Drag it behind your fastest stallion.

BATMAN FOREVER
ON: PLAYSTATION AND SEGA SATURN
This is: A truly dreadful side-scrolling beat 'em up with graphics that looked more than a little like dog sick.
Recommended punishment: The screaming torment of the damned

BATMAN OF THE FUTURE: RETURN OF THE JOKER
ON: N64
This is: More side-scrolling makes-us-wanna cry wastage of the Batman licence. Some people have called it the worst superhero game ever made.
Recommended punishment: Christmas dinner with Penny out of Big Brother.

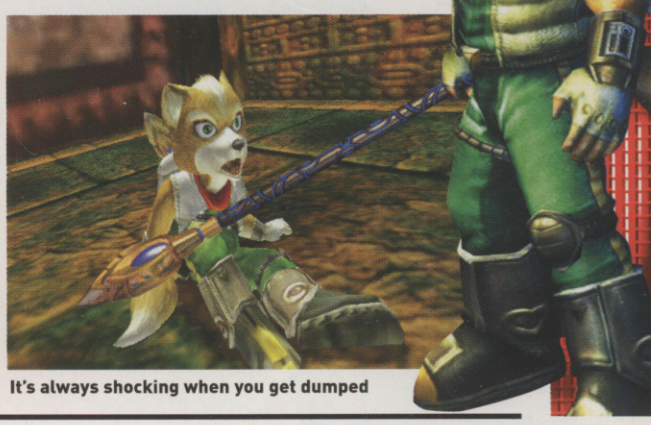
Star Fox plays it up for Cube

FIRST IN-GAME PICS

With friends like these, who needs enemies?

The first in-game shots from Star Fox Adventures hint at how the final game will play, with an on-screen display that shows the gameplay is more like Zelda than traditional Star Fox blasting action.

According to Rare, the guys developing the game, the green attack button makes McCloud ready his staff, but then what? Though the pad layout in Star Fox has not been finalised, CVG reckons GameCube's yellow analogue stick, which replaces the C buttons on the N64 pad, could be used to the move the staff around and execute different attacks. It's also likely to handle the camera angle during exploration mode, but we'll give you an updated report in next month's CVG, after we've had a proper go of all of GameCube's launch line-up at SpaceWorld.



It's always shocking when you get dumped

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COIN GOBBLER

COMING TO AN ARCADE NEAR YOU SOON

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4

Publisher: Sega
Developer: AM2
Out: Q4
Players: 1-2
Where to find it: Nationwide

Monks are supposedly peaceful. Not Lei-Fei. As Lau storms in your direction with a flurry of attacks, you retaliate with a powerful kick in the gob. Lau hits the ground so hard that the concrete slabs beneath him shatter.

As VF nuts will have figured out by now, Lei-Fei is one of the new combatants in VF4, and the way he looks and fights is awesome, but this is by no means just a one-man show. The new look, stunning character animations, super-smooth action and breathtaking backgrounds mean that VF4 could well give Tekken 4 a run for its money.

AWESOME ARENAS

Like Tekken 4, VF4 has focused a great deal of effort to impress us with arenas which are just as animated and interactive as the characters. And we're certainly impressed. There's snow halfway up your shins on one level, and as you slug it out it reacts to your movements. It's especially cool when you knock another character on to their back, because they leave a big imprint of their body in the snow.

KILLER BLOW

Aside from its serious graphical oomph, VF4 kicks it in the action department too, keeping the traditional VF style of fighting but making it more accessible. By reducing the number of buttons back to three – block, punch and kick – pulling off combos has become a lot easier to master. However, there's still a hardcore move-learning element in VF4 to keep fans of complex signature attacks coming back for more. If the overall look of VF4 were a martial arts move, it'd be a killer throat chop, the fighting action would be a vicious flying spin-kick and put together the final product is a knockout combo that's right up there with Tekken 4.

Cool backgrounds and flash moves, what more do you want?

"Check my pecs. Feel my power!"

Man in mask say: "Me no eat pizza"

Red cars: tougher to insure

Paris: capital of France

ACTIVISION SPEEDS IT UP

You wanna go faster?

A yellow car with 'two reds' syndrome

Forget Gran Turismo 3. Forget earning licences and taking tests and all that jazz, what you really want to do is race high-performance cars REALLY FAST, yes?

Of course you do. And Supercar Street Challenge aims to let you do just that. Maker Activision has snaffled the world's most fearsome roadsters for the game, including the Lotus M215, Callaway C12, Fioravanti F100, Pagani Zonda C12-S, Vision CTEK K/2, Bertone Pixster, Rinspeed E-Go Rocket, the Saleen, and the Pontiac Concept GTO.

Players can leap inside any of these dream rides and motor around up to 23 courses spread all over the world. We're talking London, Monaco, Los Angeles, Munich and Turin among others.

From what we know, and judging by the look of the screenshots, this is full-throttle arcade thrills, bound to pull your chain if you're a Ridge Racer junkie.

San Francisco? Yes, please

Watch the paintwork, dude

WE MAKE THIS MAG

Meet CVG

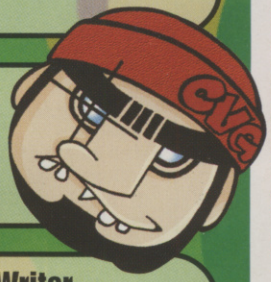
Alex Simmons, Editor
I'VE BEEN PLAYING
1. Mario Kart
2. Resident Evil Code: Veronica X
3. Operation Flashpoint

Dan Payne, Art Editor
I'VE BEEN PLAYING
1. Silent Hill 2
2. Red Faction
3. Max Payne

Jenny McComb, Designer
I'VE BEEN PLAYING
1. Mario Kart
2. Rayman M
3. Sheep Dog 'n' Wolf

Les Ellis, Games Editor
I'VE BEEN PLAYING
1. Mario Kart
2. Silent Hill 2
3. Tekken

Lee Skittrell, Senior Writer
I'VE BEEN PLAYING
1. Freak Out
2. Mario Kart
3. Hot Potato



Pete Walker, Deputy Editor
I'VE BEEN PLAYING
1. Silent Hill 2
2. Dragon Riders
3. Max Payne

Mike Cooper, Writer
I'VE BEEN PLAYING
1. Silent Hill 2
2. Rayman M
3. Splashdown

computer and video GAMES

Dennis Publishing Ltd,
30 Cleveland Street, London
W1P 5FF

EDITOR
Alex Simmons
DEPUTY EDITOR
Peter Walker
GAMES EDITOR
Les Ellis
SENIOR STAFF WRITER
Lee Skittrell
STAFF WRITER
Michael Cooper
ART EDITOR
Dan Payne
DESIGNER
Jenny McComb

PRODUCTION EDITOR
Steve O'Hagan
TIPS EDITOR
Barny Zoeller
ONLINE EDITOR
Pat Garratt
ONLINE TECHNICAL MANAGER
Stephen Fulljames
ONLINE SENIOR WRITER
Johnny Minkley
CONTRIBUTORS
(Words) Andrew Holmes, Steve Hill, Tom Guise, Bill Miner, Alex Huhtala, Johnny Minkley, Steve Fulljames, Maura Sutton, Justin Keeling, Richie Shoemaker, Steve O'Hagan, Dylan Davies, Steve Owen *(Design)* Ian Jackson *(Subbing)* Vanessa Hards *(Character Illustrations)* Akiko Kiura *(Photography)* Mike Harding, Dan Trent

CVG EDITORIAL
0207 907 6565
CVG EDITORIAL FAX
0207 907 6566
GROUP PUBLISHER
Helen Cribb 0207 907 6370
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
Tara Leathers 0207 907 6508
GROUP SALES DIRECTOR
Ian Westwood
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
John Garewal 0207 907 6008
ACCOUNT MANAGER
Richard Downey 0207 907 6671
LEISURE GROUP AD MANAGER
Mandy Hewitt 0207 907 6670
SENIOR SALES EXEC
Emily Ford 0207 907 6672

SENIOR SALES EXEC
Zoe Winterson 0207 907 6673
GROUP PRODUCTION MANAGER
Simon Maggs 0207 907 6051
LIST RENTAL EXECUTIVE
Nerys Church 0207 907 6140
DIRECT MARKETING DIRECTOR
Julian Thorne
NEWSTRADE MANAGER
Frzana Rehman 0207 907 6148
MANAGING DIRECTOR DENNIS COMPUTING
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Computer And Video Games uses

Hercules

to go gung-ho with Max Payne

Dennis PPA

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X MARKS THE SPORT

ESPN X Games Skateboarding

We've all dreamt of curling a free kick into the top corner of the net, Beckham-style, but have you really, honestly, ever wished it was you precariously leaping 20 feet into the air on a flimsy bit of fibreglass? It's not without very good reason that major sports channel ESPN has categorised skateboarding under its extreme sports 'X Games' label. And after the enormous success of Activision's two Tony Hawk's games, Konami has grabbed the rights to the sport, and the increasingly high-profile stars that risk life and limb to compete in it.

We popped over to Barcelona for the very first European X Games Qualifier, to get a first look at Konami's new PS2 game and to generally soak up the atmosphere. But in time-honoured European fashion, it pissed down with rain for all but 30 minutes of our visit. With just a brief view of some quite incredible practice sessions, our Iberian whistle-stop featured a few hours on the game instead, still a few months shy of its Christmas release date.

Designed to recreate the 2000 X Games in San Francisco, Konami's PS2 title concentrates on genuine competitions and reconstructions of the half-pipes and park courses experienced by the competitors. Eight licensed riders (including Bob Burnquist and Colin McKay) ride 64 fully customisable skateboards, and the tutorial takes you through the basics of how to get that all-important 'air'. It's by defying the laws of gravity so blatantly that you get the essential seconds needed to perform a range of stunts, twists, grinds and – um – other seemingly innocuous terms that are gradually finding their way into the English language. There's even six very enjoyable fantasy levels, with hidden areas only accessible by pulling off big tricks. A two-player split-screen option adds that competitive edge.

Wince, then, this Christmas, when your seemingly indestructible on-screen character wipes out yet again.

Wave to the mums and dads at the back

Skate around Blofeld's lab. Mind out now!

Dinosaurs once roamed here. Probably

THE EUROPEAN X GAMES QUALIFIER

Featuring wakeboarding, in-line skating, bicycle stunt riding and skateboarding, Barcelona's top winners are competing in Philadelphia on 17-22 August. Skateboarding has two classifications: Vert takes place in a half-pipe, where the art is to perform as many linked tricks as possible within a time-limit. Park offers more variety in a deliberately designed sequence of jumps, slopes and walls.

Dreamcast.

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GAME: TEKKEN 4 **FORMAT:** ARCADE/PS2 **COST:** TBC **OUT:** ARCADE-NOW/PS2-XMAS 2002 **PLAYERS:** 1-2

-2 **DEVELOPER:** NAMCO **PUBLISHER:** PS2-SONY

Words: Les Ellis Screenshots: Namco

TEKKEN 4

IT'S KER-RUNCH TIME

Many moons ago there were only two names in fighting games, Mortal Kombat and Street Fighter, locked in an eternal battle to see which was the hardest. Then one game came along and took them both down. Now in its fifth generation, can anything stop Tekken from being king of the fist 'em ups?

TEKKEN 4

IT'S

A game series that was smacking its bitch up long before Prodigy even thought of it, Tekken has done as much to help the violence in videogames debate as the elections did to raise your interest in politics. Last time out, Tekken Tag was as disappointing as having to sit through a chick flick to get to the pervy bedroom scene, only to find it stars someone who looks like your gran minus the false teeth. Beneath the gloss and shine, Namco had done the unthinkable: it had broken Tekken. But Namco's back and this time it's come to pick a fight.

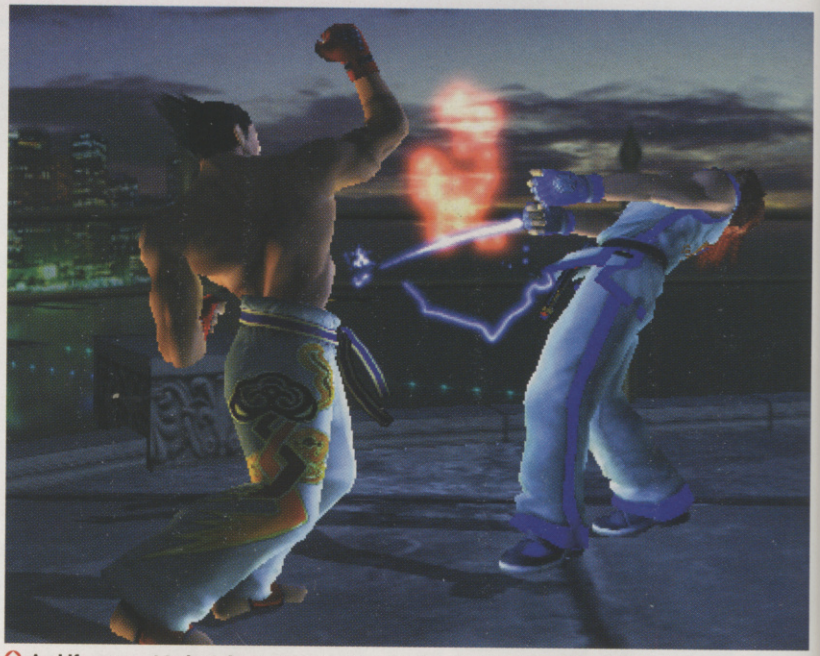
You want lush levels? You got 'em. They'll all have unique features that you can utilise for scrapping

New recruits

To keep the interest going in a fifth instalment of Tekken, Namco was going to have to come up with something special after the debacle that was Tag.

As you would expect, new characters play an important part. We know of three so far, although only one of them was playable in the version we played at Namco HQ. The rest of the cast are, like Tekken 3, going to be time-coded so they only become available at a certain date to keep interest in the game going. Damn their sneaky coding hides.

The newcomers are led by British boxer Steve Fox. Being British, we can only assume that he's famous for spending more time flat on his back, unconscious, or appearing on crap quiz shows like Blankety Blank than holding championship belts. And as a boxer, Steve's feet are as much use as a female British tennis player, so he doesn't use kicks. But those kick



And if you want to be taken seriously as a fighter, don't turn up wearing pyjamas

ANOTHER HIGH IN THE WALL

The walls in Tekken 4 are no longer there just to show the limits of the arena you are in. They are now part of the combat. Throwing or smashing an opponent into a wall causes damage, and if you're fast enough to sneak in a quick combo as they recover from having their vertebrae rearranged, you can cause a serious dent in their energy bar. Plenty of chances, then, to humiliate an unsuspecting opponent. But be wary, because if they're any good they may be able to reverse you into the wall and do exactly the same to you.

Trap an opponent against a wall and pummel them to a bleeding wreck

Low ceilings give you something else to juggle an opponent into

KER-RUNCH TIME

buttons don't go wasted, because you can use them to sway him away from any move thrown at you. You'll need to get in close to do the real damage, but the rumours of him being able to bite an opponent's ear are, as yet, unconfirmed. As for the other newbies, Craig Marduk and Christie Monteiro, no one outside of a Japanese code lab has seen them, but we know they're in there, and with moves like the Alligator, Elbow Sting, Satellite Moon (the mind boggles) and the Fruit Picker, you can bet your block button that we want to play them.

Eye-bleeding detail

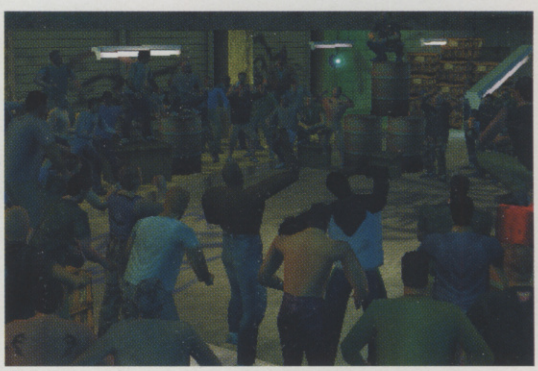
Tekken 3 took the basics of fighting games about as far as they could go – how many different ways can there be of punching someone in the face? So instead of wasting time on pointless gimmicks like Tag, the graphic artists and level designers have really been going to town. Remember all the fuss that was made about every blade of grass moving in Tag, all the stuff we really couldn't care about because it never affected the gameplay? They've learned their lesson. Now these amazing new environments all have quirks that will affect how you play in them.

But let's not take anything away from the crisp look and flowing hair of the fighters themselves. The women may not jiggle as much as the girls from Dead Or Alive 2, but with all the characters' new moves and expanded range of combos, Tekken 4 is a breathtaking sight to behold. Away from the fighters, Namco has taken the game to new levels with the locations. Forget

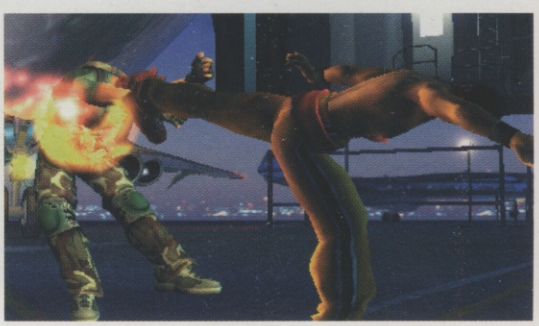
As wowed as we were with the Virtua Fighter 4 pics, can it really move as well as the master fighter here?

Yoshimitsu can use that sword for much more than just fighting, clever chap

Possibly the only time animal cruelty is positively encouraged. Go on, punch the tiger



Watch the crowd get excited the longer the fight goes on



Law and Hwoarang got bored waiting for the plane

TEKKEN 4

IT'S

If you look real close you can see his athlete's foot. Honest

"TEKKEN'S TH

Forget Queensbury rules, elbows are as legal as a fist or a boot to the face in Tekken 4

While your opponent is reeling get in there with a fist to the head

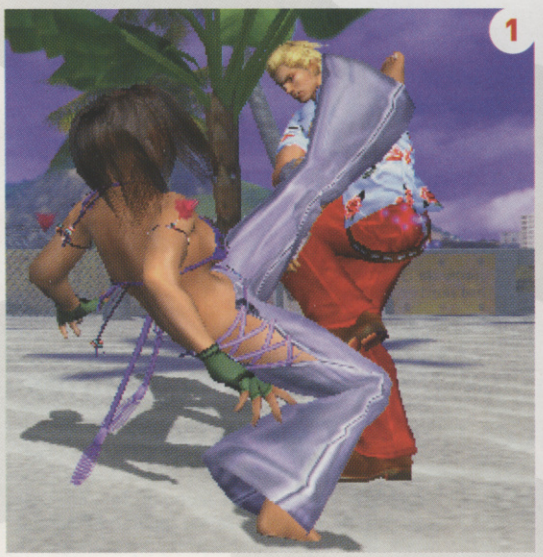
Then a pounding flurry will bring him to his knees for your finishing combo

KER-RUNCH TIME

generic arenas that may have looked different but all felt the same to fight in – each location has unique characteristics that you can use to your advantage. With a little imagination, those pillars in the airport can become your best mate, or the ramp in car park can be your little present for whoever dared to challenge you.

Na na, missed me

Despite the fact that Tekken 4 has been on the receiving end of the kind of cosmetic surgery that Jeffrey Archer's butt will need when he gets out of prison, the most important change isn't the graphics or the locations. Thanks to the new fully 3D arenas, you can actually make your character change position and move in and out of the level, rather than just left and right. It allows you to dodge opponents to get in a sneaky shot and also serves as another way to break up a combo if you are on the receiving end of a total caning.



New fighter Steve is disturbed by Christie's fashion sense

Her lightning quick feet are deadly

And her flip kick is gonna leave a bruise

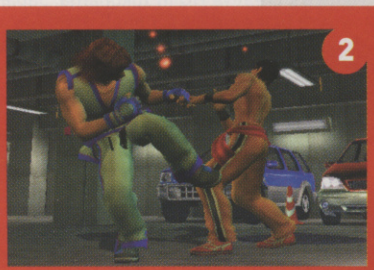
THE TRUE FIGHTING KING"

With new moves, new combos and the new environment interaction, this all adds up to a whole new fighting experience that means even die-hard Tekken fans will have to learn some new tricks to master. The days of flukey button-mashing Tekken victories are over – if you want to get the best out of Tekken, you're going to have to bring the best out of you to do it.

Sony but so far

But the biggest news that all us console owners have been waiting for is the PlayStation 2 version. The arcade may be getting it first, but if Namco obeys tradition then the PlayStation 2 will get a superior version. If you remember last time out, we had complete mini-games to play, as well as a solid conversion of the arcade smackfest. You also won't have to wait for the time lock-outs to pass to reveal the new characters – you can unlock them all simply by fighting and winning. A lot. After the rush job that was Tekken Tag, you will at last get the chance to see what Namco can do when it gets to grips with the power locked away inside a PS2.

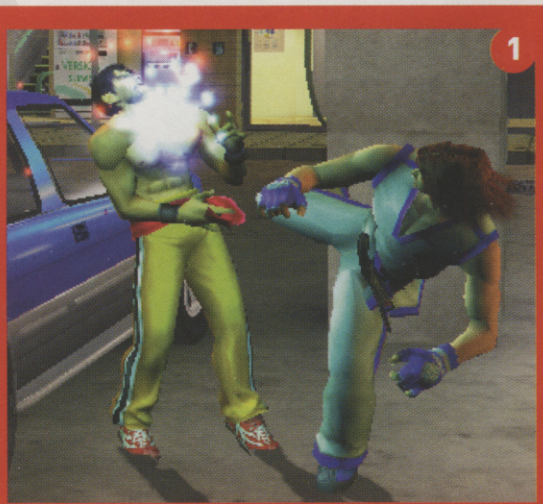
The early signs are promising enough. With visuals that are going to make the entire development world sit up and take notice and the kind of fist-in-face action that proves irresistible, Namco may have just managed to redeem itself and return Tekken to its rightful place as the true king of fighters.



A kick to the knee leaves him hurt

He recovers but is getting pushed back

Against the wall where he's finished...



Pinned against the car, Law is taking an almighty pounding from Hwoarang, but a counter can get him out of this spot

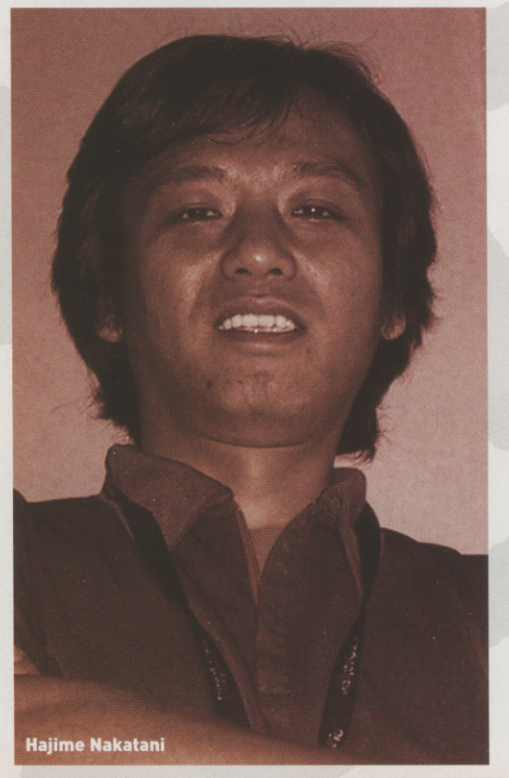
...off with a devastating kick combo sending him airborne. He hits the roof and comes back down the hard way. Unlucky, pal

TEKKEN 4

IT'S

TALKING TEKKEN

Spilling buckets of beat 'em up beans with Hajime Nakatani, the geezer in charge of Tekken 4...



Hajime Nakatani

To get the real scoop on Tekken 4, we sat down with the top dog at Namco responsible for the project. Hajime Nakatani is the head honcho of Namco's global arcade and home (PS2, Xbox, GameCube) software development, overseeing everything from Tekken to Ridge Racer. Nakatani-san was also the original producer on the first Tekken game, and serves as executive producer on Tekken 4. He took time out on the last morning of Tekken 4's mad development schedule to chat with Justin Keeling at Namco's creative HQ in Yokohama, Japan.

CVG: What is your background at Namco?

NAKATANI: Far too many titles to mention. I've been developing games at Namco for 19 years and have been involved in more or less all the major projects in that time, leading up to my position today where I oversee all videogame development at Namco. Although I'm not able to be involved in all the nitty gritty of every title.

CVG: How did the idea for Tekken come about, Namco's first 3D fighter?

NAKATANI: Well, we actually made the very first 3D game on the market. It was a racing sim called Winning Run and we released that around 1984. So we had been interested in moving more of our games to 3D before that.

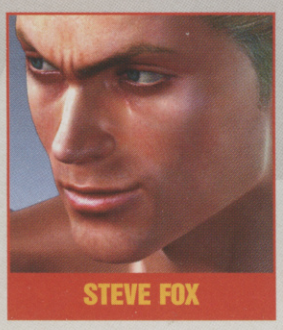
CVG: Was Tekken a reaction to Sega's groundbreaking Virtua Fighter or did you have plans for a 3D fighter before that?

NAKATANI: Sega released Virtua Racing and then Virtua Fighter before we had a chance to make our own game, so we had to follow its lead. Actually we didn't have any serious plans to release a 3D fighter until Virtua Fighter came on the market and changed everything, although we'd started our investigations of a man-to-man polygon fighting game before Virtua Fighter came out. Still it came as a surprise, and we really started planning our game aggressively to compete after that. It's important to remember Virtua Fighter was not the biggest fighting game at the time – we were competing in an already crowded area with Street Fighter II and the SNK games, each with their established following.

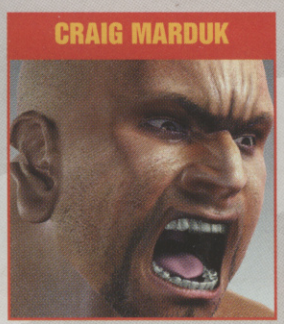
CVG: Compared to other Tekken games, what's the biggest change in Tekken 4?

NAKATANI: With the power of the System 246 hardware (based on PS2 hardware), we have been able to add a major new gameplay feature, which is the concept of fully 3D environments for the fighters to spar in. This is obviously a natural progression for the series, and one that

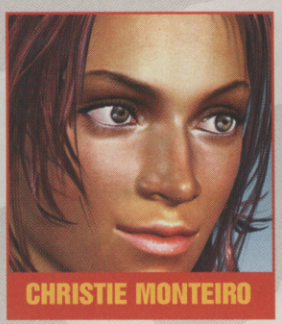
THE CAST SO FAR



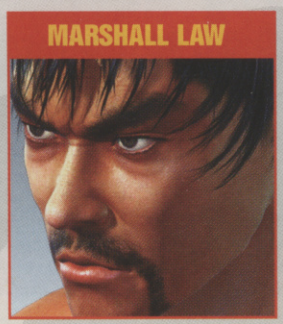
STEVE FOX



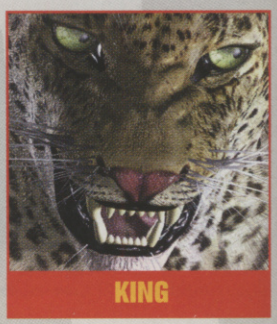
CRAIG MARDUK



CHRISTIE MONTEIRO



MARSHALL LAW



KING

KER-RUNCH TIME

adds a great deal to the Tekken formula. We now have walls and solid objects which all need a different approach to fighting.

CVG: How interactive are these objects? Can you break them? Do they cause extra damage?

NAKATANI: You can't break objects or use them for extra damage... the new strategy is more in the positioning of your fighter. We also have a new move that enables a trapped fighter to flip positions quickly. Actually we are still tweaking this feature this morning so I can't go into details, but we hope players will use it as a big new tactic in the game. Also if players get smashed into walls they are stunned, leaving them open to further attack, but you don't lose damage for hitting a wall.

CVG: What is the inspiration for the new characters, like Christie Monteiro?

NAKATANI: We don't choose new characters based on looks or gimmicks, they are almost always based around a new fighting style which we haven't yet explored. For example, in Tekken 4 we've introduced boxing with Steve Fox.

CVG: What feature of Tekken 4 are you most proud of as a producer?

NAKATANI: The fact that we have stayed true to the spirit and concept of Tekken, yet managed to still introduce some radical changes like the stage layout. I'm almost worried that some fans might say Tekken 4 is too much of a change!

CVG: Let's talk competition. What's your impression of Virtua Fighter 4?

NAKATANI: VF4 is more of an orthodox sequel than Tekken 4 is. I'd say VF4 is a less of a series progression.

CVG: How about Dead or Alive 3?

NAKATANI: I've only seen pictures, but DOA3 gives me a very good impression of the hardware.

CVG: What about Tekken on, say, Xbox?

NAKATANI: We're working on just PS2 for the foreseeable future. It's just a problem of time from our point of view, because we develop on System 246 so a conversion to PS2 is natural. I don't know about the future though, when we max out that hardware we will have to look elsewhere. But hardware isn't important, the game is popular independently and I think Tekken would be a success on any platform.

CVG: When do you plan to release the PS2 version of Tekken 4?

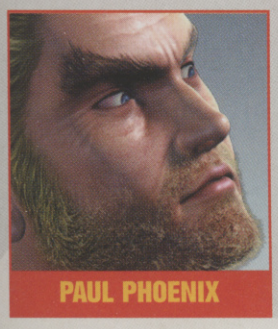
NAKATANI: I can't even begin to think about that, because the team is still working hard on finishing up the arcade version! We haven't started on the home version yet.

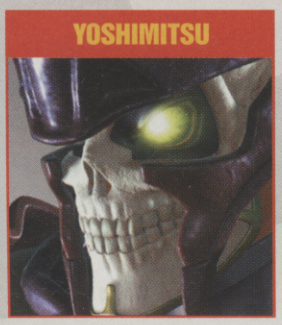
CVG: What crazy game modes will appear this time? We heard rumours of a Beat Mania-music style mode...

NAKATANI: (laughs) We have had this idea for quite some time, but it's a tough one. It's an amusing idea but we're not sure if we can really do it.

CVG: Will there be a Tekken 5, and what can we expect from it?

NAKATANI: Definitely. There were many ideas we had we couldn't include in Tekken 4. We have plans to use the 3D arenas in more interesting ways, and you will see some of that realised in the next update in the series.


PAUL PHOENIX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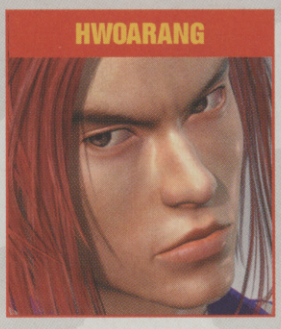
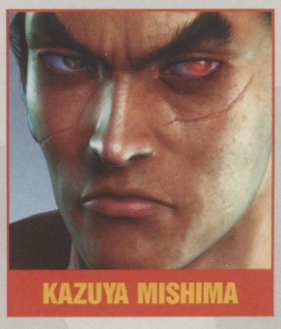

HWOARANG


KAZUYA MISHIMA

MORE TALKING TEKKEN

We hooked up with UK Tekken champ, Ant Anifowoshe, at Namco HQ so he could put Tekken 4 through its paces. Here's what the don had to say...

I'm really impressed by the way the game plays and handles, and we still haven't seen half the characters yet! If you play Tekken 3 to a really high level, you'll know a few combos. It's a help because you understand the mechanics of the game much easier and you'll understand how everything has been opened up to you. If anyone is just coming into Tekken now, then this version will just blow their minds because of the new stuff.

They have really thought about the characters and how the game should work. The spacing between the characters is a lot different. It's not just an exchange of combos like before – there's more movement and you can properly control where you put your character. In theory you can go anywhere in the arena, and that's really useful.

The arenas are in proper 3D now – I'm shocked at the way that they've managed to use that in a realistic way. If you get locked against the curve of the wall, your body will actually move along the curve. You can get trapped in corners as well and certain combos will only work in certain stages and types of terrain. Without a doubt, the car park stage is the most impressive environment I've seen in the game so far. A lot of people think it's just a rectangle, but you can take a right turn and go down a slope to a garage door. You can juggle combo someone down the ramp and into the garage door for more hits.

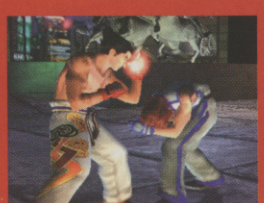
Namco, we have a problem!

The only bad thing is the universal Down Parry. If you tap forward and someone hits you with a low attack, you Down Parry instantly. It's a bit of a cheap trick. It makes some characters more powerful than they should be. You can Down Parry, then stand up and knock them deeper into the level, just by tapping down forwards on the pad. It shouldn't be in this version.

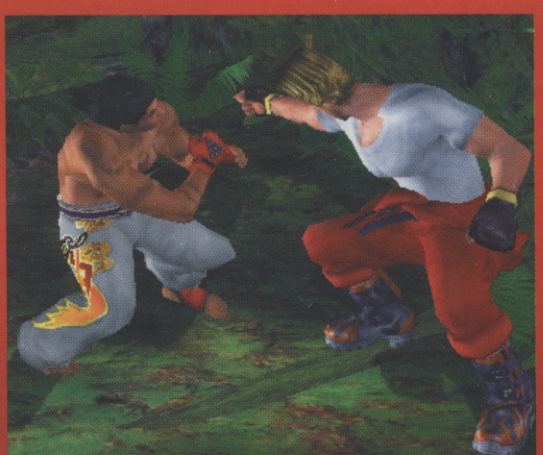
The characters themselves have very different styles now. It seems they have individual best ranges and I think that helps with the way you can control your character's movement. If your character hasn't got much range, your opponent really can take the fight to you, as you may be forced to hang back a lot and use a lot of movement and you'll be able to punish him. It all becomes a strategic battle of positioning. You can force someone into a position change as well. If you grab someone, you can control where you put them. You can pull them to one side or the other. If you have your back to a wall and someone is attacking, you can change position and push them into the wall and do a combo after that – it blows my mind!

Quick call the guards, he's gonna have it away with the machine

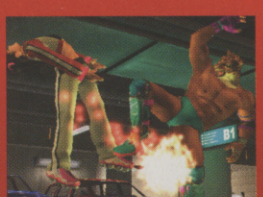
Ant Anifowoshe


Hwoarang takes time out for a little self-pleasure

Paul's mint elbow smash


Paul is left looking stupid as you dodge away from his punch

New costumes and arenas


Smack your enemy against the cars

Wearing a shirt like that, he deserves this

Look at the moving shirt!

WARNING:

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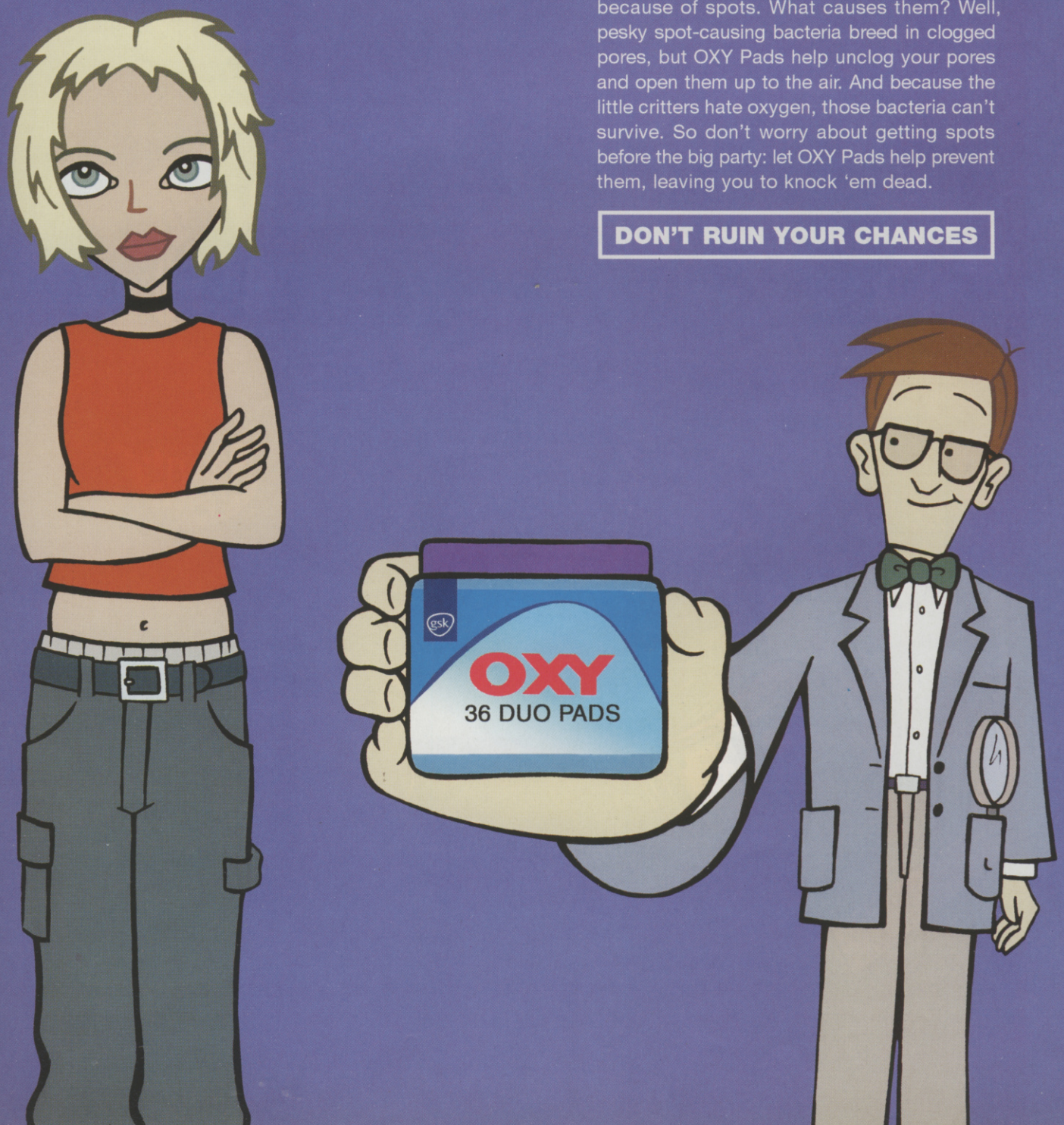
So you won't want your chances ruined because of spots. What causes them? Well, pesky spot-causing bacteria breed in clogged pores, but OXY Pads help unclog your pores and open them up to the air. And because the little critters hate oxygen, those bacteria can't survive. So don't worry about getting spots before the big party: let OXY Pads help prevent them, leaving you to knock 'em dead.

DON'T RUIN YOUR CHANCES



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WORDS
Tom Guise
ILLUSTRATION
Nishant Choksi

DEATH BY ARCADE

The coin-ops so physically demanding to play that losing *a* life is less of a worry than losing *your* life

DANGER ZONE KEY

Know your killer machine and the parts of the body most vulnerable to damage while playing it

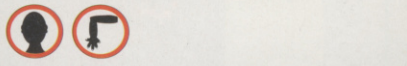
The Grim Reaper loves videogames. Yes he does. To him, home consoles are like mini combine harvesters, gathering up bales of unhealthy lard-arsed gamers to ship to the underworld as they pop their clogs in a flood of cholesterol. At least that's what the 'get 'em outdoors' lobby believe. Games are bad for your health. Do some exercise or die of a heart attack. What those ignorant salad-munching yoga fanatics don't realise is there are games that require near-astronaut levels of fitness to avoid doing yourself damage whilst playing. The kind of coin-op where the only 'op' involved is the operation you'll need after breaking both your legs playing it. The kind that brings Death himself out in a cold sweat as he realises he's going to have to work you to death. Here are the most entertaining aerobic machines ever built, and how to play them while making sure the words 'Game Over' aren't the last you ever hear.

FINAL FURLONG

Like the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, when these stallions move, pain and suffering ensue. Only in this case, it's the rider in agony. Power your steed by clenching the saddle between your thighs, rocking frantically and spanking your pony. For the final sprint you stand up, flexing your arms and legs to make that photo finish. One of the most strenuous videogames ever, it overworks your limbs for guaranteed paralysis the next day.

Danger Factor: 10

FIGHTING MANIA



This punch 'em up is based on a popular Japanese cartoon series called Fist of the North Star, which most of us have never seen. It's you against some on-screen thug and your task is to punch his stupid lights out. Six pads flip out at you randomly. Hitting them strikes body blows to your on-screen opponent until their energy bar is depleted. Yep, it's a beat 'em up with real beatings. Normally attracts the most testosterone-pumped, corn-cob-eating, muscle men in the arcade. So be careful not to laugh at their stupid posturing or you may experience that real beating, complete with depleted energy bar, before even getting on the machine.

Danger Factor: 4

DANCE STAGE EUROMIX

Ah, that dancing game. Do not be fooled by the hot-footed B-boy drawing a crowd to its digital dancefloor. He may be spasmodic, but he's certainly no body-popper.

The moves required here are more akin to prancing ex-Riverdance ponce, Michael Flatley. And the only thing the crowd are thinking is A) what a dick. And B) what a load of money he's wasted learning those embarrassing moves. Nonetheless, it does provide powerful calorie-burning, cardiovascular exercise, and is so popular it has spawned a number of lesser imitations, including the ludicrously monikered EZ2 Dancer which takes the concept beyond Twat Factor 10 with added hand-motion sensors. Certainly we've motioned with our hands in its presence.

Danger Factor: 5

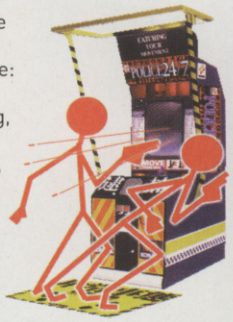
PROP CYCLE

Most of us wouldn't be seen dead on an exercise bike. But stick a TV screen on the front and tell us it's a flying bicycle and we'll pay hard cash for a go. An amazing concept, you actually steer your on-screen flycycle around collecting balloons. But the aim isn't to crazily pedal like you're in the Tour De France, as you'll just crash headlong into a cliff. And pull a muscle. Rather, glide your bike gracefully around with short bursts of leg power to exit steep dives. The biggest injury though, could be to your hairstyle as the machine blows air in your face as you pedal.

Danger Factor: 7

POLICE 24/7

This lightgun game has a big warning slapped on the side: Do not play if you have been drinking, are sick or have been sick recently, are pregnant, or are wearing a hat. That's all because you physically have to dodge incoming fire.



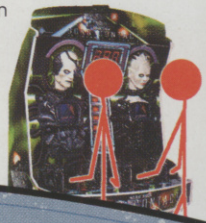
Amazingly the screen detects your movement and shifts the view, so you can duck behind pillars and even twist Matrix-style out of bullet paths. Get hit and everything goes a bit blurry (hence the sickness warning). Incredibly, Konami is bringing this game to PS2, possibly subjecting even housebound drunkards and bed-ridden ladies heavy-with-child to bouts of nausea and projectile vomiting.

Danger Factor: 3

BORG CONTACT

This bizarre endurance test features the most ominous warning of all: Do not play if you have a heart condition or skin ailments. And remove any metal jewellery. Each player gets a pair of metal rods. Grip them as the animatronic Borg before you comes to life, screaming as a simulated electric current passes through the rods. That's when you scream too. The player clenching the hardest for 30 seconds wins. Arcade staff will be on hand to prise your smouldering fingers away from the handles if you should kark it.

Danger Factor: 9



SIX OF THE NOT QUITE BEST

Not ready to stare Death in the face? Try these milder, but still strenuous, torture machines. They might cause some pain, but you should live to tell the tale.

RODEO RUMBLE
Grab the bull by the horns. Literally. Then hang on!

HORSE RACER
A full-size hydraulic horse torso that you ride like a stallion.

KICK IT
Penalty shoot-out with a football-on-a-string. Got no mates? Have a go! But wear your steel-capped boots.

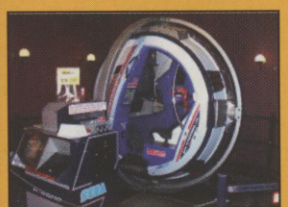
ALPINE RACER
Swivelling footpads perfectly replicate skiing without avalanche danger. Though it won't do your ankles much good.

TOP SKATER
Perform aerial skateboard tricks without ever having to see the colour of your bones.

CRACKY CRAB
The oldest game around. Hit moving plastic crabs with a mallet.

GRANDFATHER DEATH

Made by Sega in 1990, R-360 was probably the most ingenious instrument of torture since the Iron Maiden. It was a one level version of G-Loc – an Afterburner rip-off that was bollocks even back then. This machine had seat belts, an emergency panic button and span you around 360° continuously. Still the only arcade game to actually apply G-force directly to your head.



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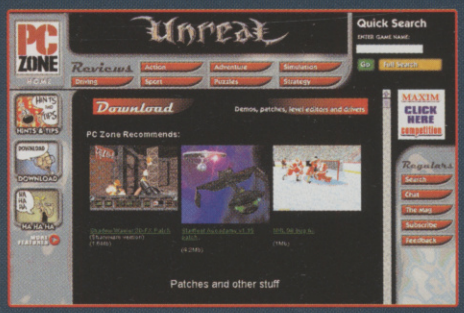

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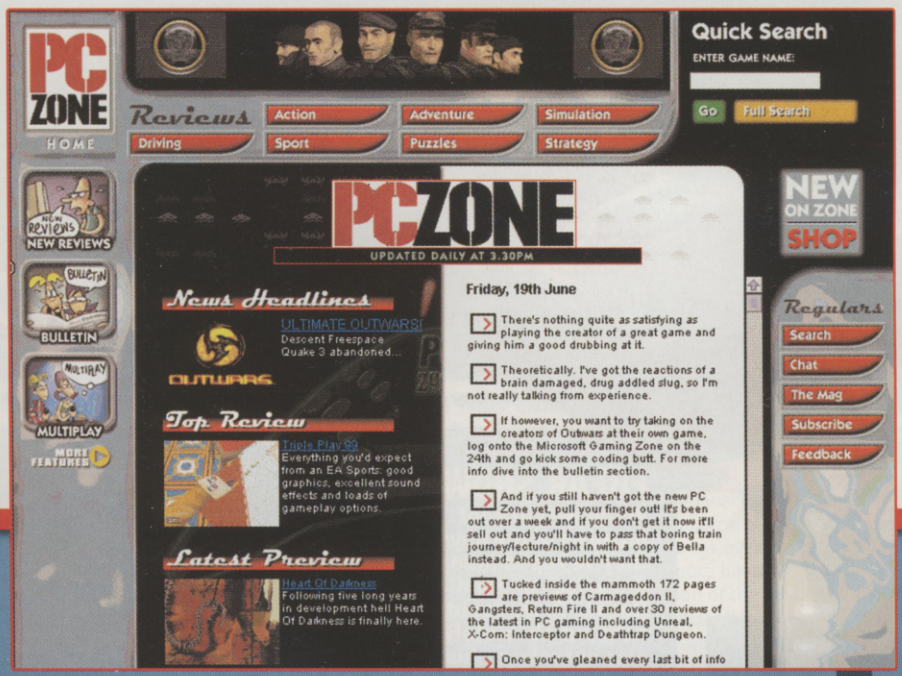

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PREVIEWS

SOUL REAVER 2

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **SEPTEMBER 2001** DEVELOPER: **CRYSTAL DYNAMICS** PUBLISHER: **EIDOS INTERACTIVE**

In Soul Reaver world, being a vampire ain't easy. Your dad is a psychopathic demon-lord who chucked you out of his court and wants you killed. The recent Vampire Genocide means it's open season on bloodsuckers and every man and his dog is looking to bag a neck-biter for the trophy cabinet at home. Plus getting any stability in your life is impossible as you shift in and out of the material and spiritual planes. And all around you warrior-priests and vampire-hunters await, all intent on hacking you into pieces. The words 'snowball in hell' come to mind.

STAKE WARS: THE VAMPIRE BITES BACK

Welcome back Ráziel, undead avenger and fallen vampire angel, for another bout of

Overuse any attack move and your energy starts to go down

Fiends haunt the spirit plane

FREAK SHOW

When we got sent pictures of the guys they've roped in to do the voices on Soul Reaver 2, we couldn't help but absolutely piss ourselves. Just gaze in awe at this award-winning duo and bow down before the sheer Oscar potential on show.

As you can see, these dudes are serious dope playaz, for real. We're just happy neither of them are our dads.

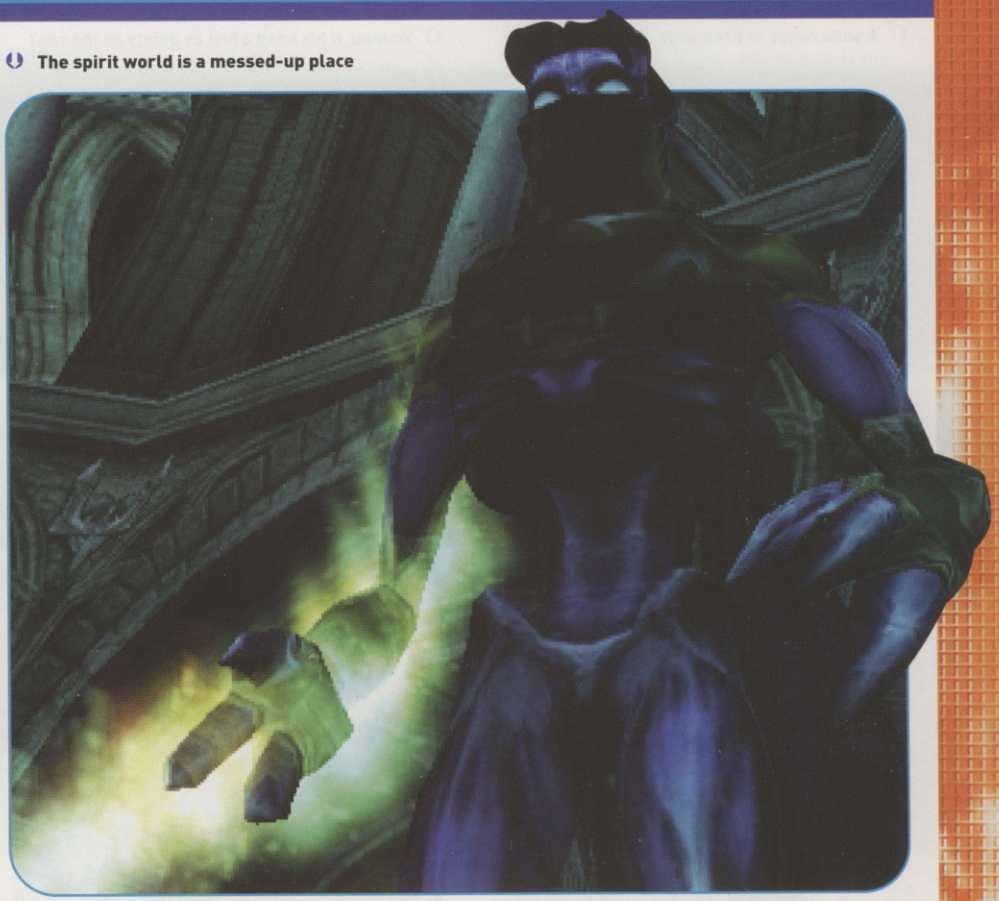
Neil Ross – bet you're glad he's not your dad

"Your dad is a psychopath who wants you killed"

The detail in the architecture will stun you

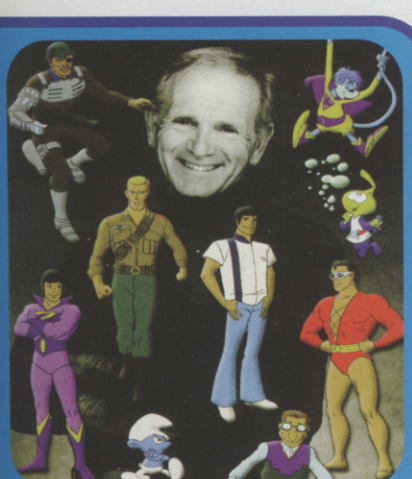
There'll be some very nasty puzzles to sort out

The spirit world is a messed-up place



third-person action-adventuring. And as anyone who's played a previous Soul Reaver game will attest, these are huge, rock-hard adventures. They are packed with reams of locations and jammed full of more puzzles than Dr Rubik's factory. All in a land where vampires have the life expectancy of Kenny in the average episode of South Park.

In this update the most obvious difference from previous games is the visuals. This being Raziel's first step in the world of PS2, everything looks shiny and new. Enormous expanses of ruined city stretch out before you, gigantic stone carved heads squatting on walls, their mouths framing the doors through which you pass. Teeming, misty swamps make the going hard as the super-smoothly animated Raziel wades knee-deep through viscous muck while under assault from ravenous ghouls. Considering the massive scale of the game, it's incredible how detailed each area is.



Michael Bell – once made a great smurf

TAKE YOUR BRAIN TO ANOTHER DIMENSION

But what really looks the nuts is the way you warp between the spiritual and physical dimensions. The screen distorts, the surrounding masonry and terrain warps, and before you know it, you're in the same place as before, only a green hue now hangs over everything and the walls and floors have contorted into a twisted distortion of the real world. It's enough to make you queasy.

Now the spirits of the dead can be seen drifting aimlessly, and sightless mole-like spectral dwellers come baying for your soul blood. The only way back to the real world is to fill yourself with the energy of your opponents' spirits and locate a dimension portal that allows you access back to the physical plane. The way you can visit any location in two different dimensions, with certain actions only possible in one of them, is cool as hell and makes for some pretty mind-bending, dimension-hopping puzzles that'll have you scratching your chin down to the bloody jawbone. Believe us, this is going to be no push-over.

FORGING AHEAD

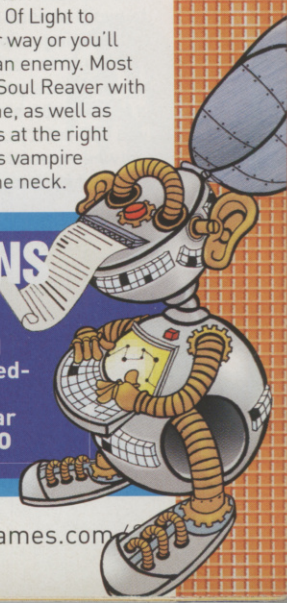
Gameplay is essentially the same as ever. Raz is still an all-action bloodsucker equally at home shinning up a wall, swimming through murky waters or leaping across gaping chasms. And, of course, hacking anyone and anything that crosses him, limb-from-limb.

But this time, with the help of Elemental Forges – power points that you stick your sword into to gain new powers – Raz can gain up to 30 new abilities throughout the game.

At times you'll need the Forge Of Light to make your sword illuminate your way or you'll need the Forge Of Dark to blind an enemy. Most puzzles revolve around imbuing Soul Reaver with the right element at the right time, as well as hopping between the dimensions at the right moments. We'd stake money this vampire actioner will hit you straight in the neck.

CVG RECKONS

Unlike swearing, this promises to be big and hard with tons of wicked-looking locations and puzzles. This vamp's far from (un)dead. Steve O



A wide range of firepower is available to you

Wonder if his head's just as pointy as the cap?

You can replay day missions at night. But why?

"Get all gung-ho and you're dead in seconds"

CODENAME: OUTBREAK

FORMAT: **PC** OUT: **SEPTEMBER** DEVELOPER: **GSC GAME WORLD** PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN INTERACTIVE**

Look too closely at any great action movie and it'll turn to crap. How come there's enough firepower aimed at Big Arnie to cause a small nuclear holocaust and he always makes it to the end of the film?

Games are the same. If you don't give reality a miss, you'll wonder whether Quake players use tubs of Vaseline to hide all the weapons they carry and end up ordering a Muscle-O-Matic™ to lug around 400 tons of equipment without so much as slowing down.

Which is where squad-based tactical shooter Codename: Outbreak comes in. It has a Body Snatchers-style sci-fi plot, but it's from the same school of gaming as Flashpoint: the game is designed to be realistic, so you're immersed in a more believable environment.

MEDICINE OR SNAKE OIL?

For instance, stealthy players live a lot longer in Outbreak because if you stand up and run around, you're picked off within seconds. It's not just a case of ducking around corners or behind trees to avoid guards either. As you seek out mission objectives like rescuing hostages, the patrols react to sound as well as sight, so you'll need to both hide in the shadows *and* keep quiet to avoid serious blood spillage.

Keeping noise to a minimum is not easy when there's you and a team mate, but you can switch between troops at will and barking orders is simple. Lucky really, because you'll need to get to grips with managing your team early on if you're to complete some missions where you have to take down targets simultaneously without raising the alarm.

Headshots work best, numbnuts

Don't expect to pick up mountains of firepower to roast alien parasites with either – if it's too heavy, it ain't coming with you unless you make room in your backpack. Add to that the fact you choose your two-man team from a roster of special forces troops, each of which has different attributes (which can improve if you do well), and things all get a bit complicated. Hell, your best marksman might not be strong enough to carry that bazooka you want him to wreak havoc with!

Outbreak's not the first game to include this kind of stuff, but it's typical of the depth of gameplay the Ukrainian developer is trying to offer – you'll need a tactical mind as well as shooting skills to advance, particularly in later levels. But, while Outbreak has some cool ideas, we're not sure how well it's all going to gel together.

CVG RECKONS

Not one for Quake freaks with itchy trigger fingers, Outbreak has some cool stealth and tactical elements. Review next ish. Pete

HOT WHEELS: EXTREME RACING

FORMAT: **PSONE** OUT: **SEPTEMBER 14** DEVELOPER: **HOTGEN** PUBLISHER: **THQ**

You may have thought PSone needed a new novelty racer like it needs a hole in the head, but the makers of Hot Wheels think the time is right for yet another racing destruction extravaganza. Thank you, guys, thank you. But the good news is that this one looks a lot of fun. Well, looks anyway.

IT'S A WIND UP

Based on the successful series of little wind-up toy vehicles, you drive a miniature motor over crazy courses, morphing at set points during each lap into speedboats, aircraft and back again. Think Micro Machines in 3D and you're pretty much there.

Tasty weaponry such as this meaty flamer mean these races are never short of some sort of action

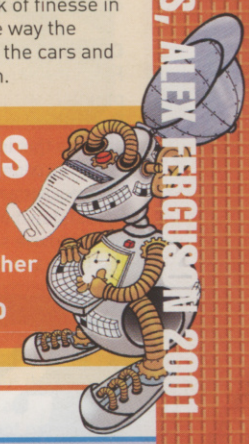
Your car turns into a boat for the water sections

It's all massively chaotic, as not only is the handling all over the place but there's a host of weapons to pick up and pound each other into the dust with. Though the vehicles may be rocket-powered, the game certainly isn't rocket science and within five nanoseconds you're pretty comfortable with what's going on.

Two-player options, Championship mode and vehicle upgrades – it's all as you'd imagine it would be. Downers include a lack of finesse in the driving, samey courses and the way the planes seem to handle exactly like the cars and the boats. But it still feels quite fun.

CVG RECKONS

It may not be what your collection is crying out for, but here comes another passable novelty action racer for PSone. Steve O



ALEX FERGUSON'S PREMIERSHIP MANAGER 2001

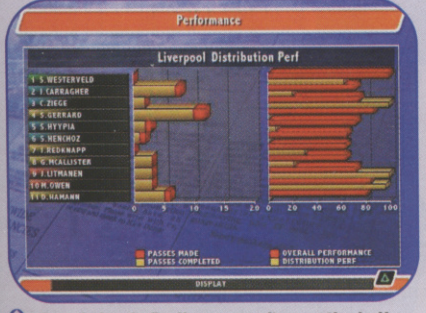
FORMAT: **PS2/PC** OUT: **SEPTEMBER** DEVELOPER: **ANCO** PUBLISHER: **3DO**

This may come as a shock to you, but being the manager of the world's most famous football team entails a lot more than having digs at the manager of your main opposition and rowing with your most famous midfielder and his pop star bint. You also have to stare at screen after screen of stats and figures as you try to take a team of losers and turn them into the finest in Europe.

Collective lunacy grips the players

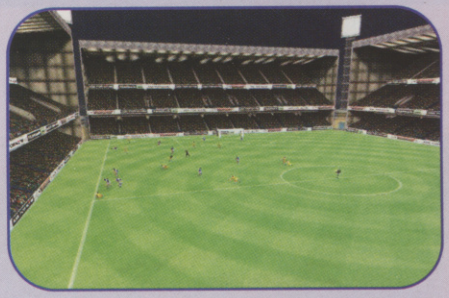
"I'M SCARED TO GO ON ZE PITCH!"

Without having to cater for the limitations of the PSone, the developer has really gone to town on creating in-depth stats and characteristics that should make players react to situations more realistically. So expect Collymore-style sulks and moaning French defenders who can't hack English football. On top of dealing with that, there is an incredibly detailed tactics designer that lets you adjust the way your team plays – let's face it, you could spend hours tinkering with your team for a game that lasts just a few minutes. The matches themselves are viewed from various 3D viewpoints and levels of detail, depending on how you want to watch the events as they unravel. Man Utd fans or not, there should be enough in here to keep the stat-loving footie brigade happy.



Proof: Jamie Redknapp can't pass the ball

Replay and study crucial match moments



It probably won't push PS2 to its visual limits

CVG RECKONS

Love 'em or hate 'em, this'll be the first management sim on PS2, so hardcore footie fans should start warming up now. Les

SPLASHDOWN

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **AUTUMN/WINTER 2001** DEVELOPER: **RAINBOW STUDIOS** PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

Powering across the sea, you dare to take one hand off the handlebars to wipe salt water from your blinded eyes. As your other arm fights to keep the Seedoo under control, the craft unexpectedly ramps up another rider's wake, causing you to grasp frantically at the controls, struggling against flying headfirst into the drink.

Back in control, your heart thunders adrenaline around your body as you twist the throttle, urging the Seedoo to go ever faster. Every muscle in your arms is in agony; salt water lashes your face but still you cling on, skipping majestically across the glistening waves. That's pretty much what riding a Seedoo must feel like, and that's the experience that any game based on the water sport must try to mimic. Happily, Splashdown's on course to do exactly that.

CUNNING STUNTS

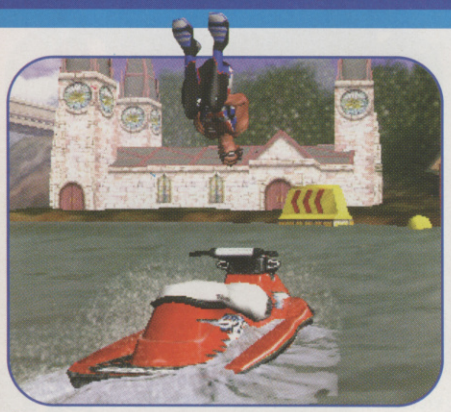
From the screenshots it's easy to draw parallels with the N64 and GameCube Wave Race titles, but once you start playing it's soon obvious this isn't the case. Whereas Wave Race is very arcadey, and a so-called 'tunnel racer' where you can't deviate from a set course, Splashdown offers far greater depth thanks to an extensive stunt system. Rainbow Studios is the team behind the awesome ATV Off Road Fury on PS2, so expect similar levels of freedom in Splashdown's numerous levels.

Splashdown does an excellent job of replicating the pure adrenaline rush of Seedoo racing

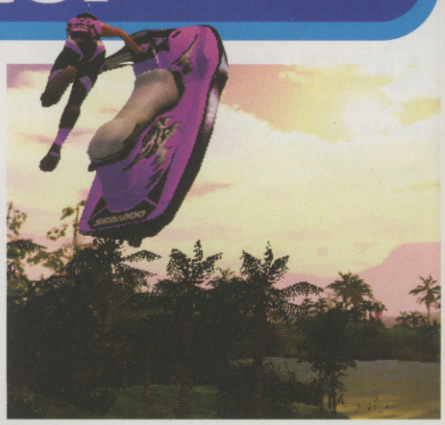
"So real you can almost taste the salt water"

THE WATER RAT RACE

You'll race across the globe, from the sun-drenched climes of Hawaii, to the eerie gloom of Loch Ness. What each location has in common, however, is a truly remarkable water effect: along with GameCube Wave Race, this has some of the most impressive water effects ever seen in a videogame. Everything behaves exactly as it would in real life, and every move you or other riders make affects the water in an utterly convincing manner. Couple this with excellent, responsive controls and we have a game with serious potential.



You have to be brave to try this one out



View your Seedoo from a variety of positions

Geri refuses to miss her lunchtime yoga

Get a load of the remarkable water effects

CVG RECKONS

Splashdown is shaping up to be a fun yet deep (sea) experience. It's only two rather than four-player, but if the frame rate's sorted out, it'll be an extreme sporter's dream. Johnny

"M is for, um, multiplayer. And multiple personalities"

One of the most annoying things about racing games is when you're trailing at the back of the pack with no hope of recovering before the chequered flag. It's a reach-for-the-reset-button moment, guaranteed. Developers know this and for years have tried to give you a fighting chance with short cuts, power-ups and catch-ups – those mysterious speed boosts you get when you're the one lagging at the back of the grid. But Rayman M tries to do things a little differently.

Picture this: you're in third place, the finish line is in sight and any hope of winning is fading fast. You spot a large switch, shoot it and the terrain ahead changes, blocking your opponents' path and letting you storm to victory. Everyone howls with disgust. Except you, you annoyingly smug gobshite.

Battles see you trying to shoot the ass off your opponent. At the moment, the controls are clumsy

There's plenty of jostling and argy-bargy

RAYMAN M

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **NOVEMBER** DEVELOPER: **UBI SOFT** PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

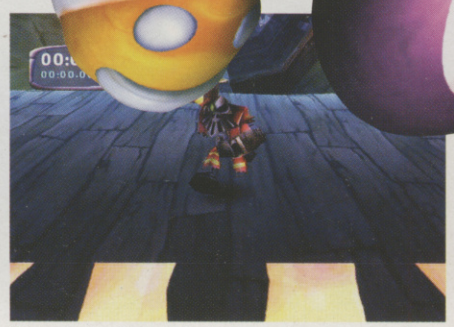
The animated lighting effects add great atmosphere to the awesome beautiful levels

HEDGE YOUR BETS

So, take nine million unit-selling Rayman, put him on PS2, make it a racer, add in a long-awaited multiplayer mode and then innovate. Surely France's greatest gaming hero is going to be bigger than ever? Well, maybe, but it seems the limb-lacking li'l fella has gone all schizophrenic on us. Rayman M not only wants to be a racer, but a shooter too. Choose which mode you want and then hit the several variations each has to offer in one-player to unlock new stuff for multiplay.

In Race mode, the courses are a visual feast set on various levels and jam-packed with short cuts, slides, power-ups, tough obstacles and those switch-activated changeable landscapes. This mix makes it almost as much a platformer as a racer. But Battle mode is a little less immediate. Unless they tweak the bewildering and currently jerky controls, you'll probably end up wondering why they bothered, given the racing game would be pretty solid as a stand-alone title.

Short cuts are tricky but well worth the effort



There's a host of mad characters to choose from

CVG RECKONS

Mixing game styles worked for Mario's multiplayer Party games but fell flat in Sonic Shuffle. Which this'll take after is anyone's guess. Mike C

RUN LIKE HELL

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **TBC** DEVELOPER: **DIGITAL MAYHEM** PUBLISHER: **INTERPLAY**

This is so messed up. As if the space station going tits up wasn't bad enough, you had to stand by helplessly and watch as an alien ripped your partner's head off and threw it at you in a spray of gore. And if that didn't loosen your bowels, you have no weapons and the tank-sized extra-terrestrial laxative turns on you and chases you down a maze of corridors. That certainly ought to open your arse floodgates in a gush of man slurry.

ALIENS? WHO SAID THAT?

Comparisons with the movie Aliens are inevitable and mostly deserved, what with blowing big xenomorphs out of airlocks, Lance Henriksen doing a voice-over and a plot that ain't that far from the first two movies. What's more, it also manages to capture the highlights of both films – the tense atmosphere of having bugger all firepower and being forced to leg it, plus the occasional all-out wars when you do lay your hands on enough weaponry to make a stand.

SHENMUE WITH GORE

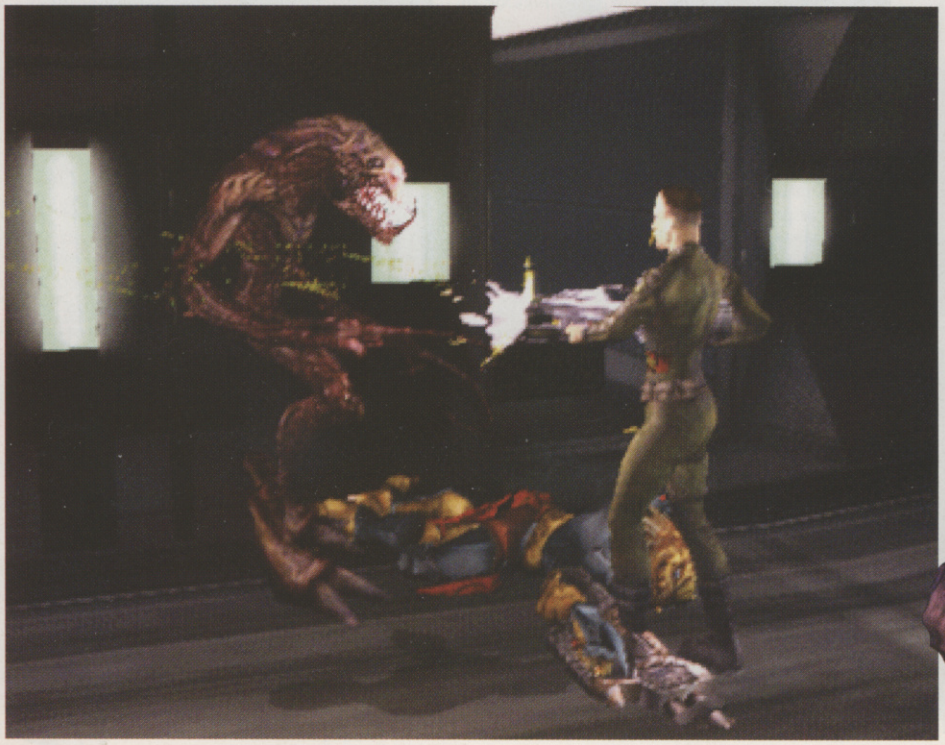
The non-combat sections with you running for your life are very Shenmue. Pegging it down a corridor pursued by a slobbering beast who wants to see if human flesh tastes like chicken, you come across loads of obstacles. Hit the X and Triangle buttons just right and you'll pull off a death-defying stunt to duck out of the way. Get it wrong and you're lunchmeat.

Another sequence sees you mashing the buttons Track 'n' Field style, trying to lever a door open as an alien charges down a corridor

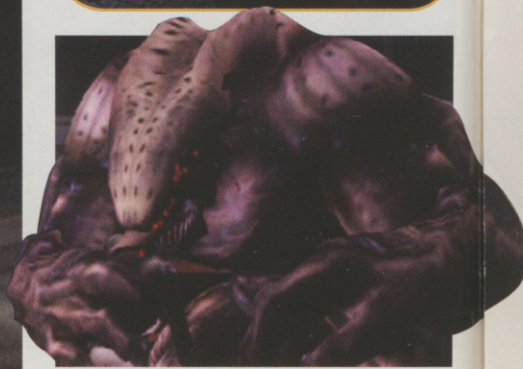
Dance, you alien sonofabitch, dance! A little cordite choreography is always good for a laugh

"Sometimes big guns ju
enough. That's what leg

When you lay your hands on some heavy duty ordnance, the green stuff really starts to flow



Simple puzzles break up the action



The creature designs aren't imaginative but you won't care when you're blowing them apart

"Mum, I'd like you to meet my new boyfriend. His name is Xazkkerr. He's a pussycat really. Oh yes, did I tell you we're expecting?"

ust aren't gs are for"

towards you. Nerve-jangling atmosphere? It's tenser than the final two minutes of a Man U-Bayern Munich Champions' League Final.

DON'T SAY IT, SPRAY IT

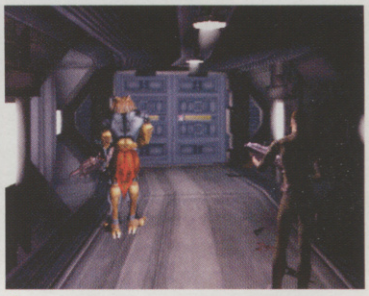
This atmosphere could have easily been blown away once the gunplay starts but, thanks to the tight claustrophobic conditions that see you initially fighting in corridors or small rooms, things stay taut throughout.

Once your trigger finger gets something to play with, the bullets start flying and the gore sprays in all directions. Your initial weapons are good enough at first, but if you really want to feel panic, check your shorts when you realise you've just emptied all your ammo into a big momma alien only to realise it hasn't even scratched it. Time to find yourself some heavy-duty firepower on this rustbucket station.

HARSH LANGUAGE AND VIOLENCE

With this level of violence and gore it's only right the characters use adult language. But it still comes as a shock the first time you hear your alien sidekick (voiced by Clancy Brown, who played that freak in Highlander) let rip with the F word. Puzzle-solving is limited to finding terminals to open doors, which is fine as it lets you focus more on the all-out action and Shenmue button-pressing tasks. After all, you've a space station full of bloodthirsty aliens and a lot of guns to play with, so who the hell wants to spend too much time solving puzzles? Aliens meets Shenmue? We can't wait.

Shenmue-like rhythm-action chase sequences pop up every now and then



There's not much strategy involved, apart from when to save ammo

"Sorry mate, if your name's not on the list, you're not coming in"

Your alien sidekick has a mouth like a sewer

The tension never lets up in these dark tunnels

CVG RECKONS

No holding back on the gore and the gunplay, that's what we like to see. If the rest of the game can deliver the same tension and fragging fun as the opening sections we've seen, then Interplay could be on to something big here. Les

The hectic battles can look good, but it's all too damn chaotic for us

There are plenty of motors to choose from. We call this the Purple Helmet

"You shoot. You miss. You wish the game would end"

Multiplayer is better than the one-player game

Staying on target is an achievement in itself

MOTOR MAYHEM

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **OCTOBER** DEVELOPER: **BEYOND GAMES** PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

Take Quake's finely tuned combat thrills in well-designed arenas and Mario Kart's fast-paced arcade racing hilarity, then add a bit of Robot Wars and you get... well, what Motor Mayhem should've been.

Instead tricky controls, the fast speed of the vehicles and the inability to lock on to enemies make this arena-based shooter incredibly frustrating. The futuristic battles of the Vehicle Combat League are sloppier than Speedy Gonzalez's sphincter after a month of eating chilli cheese, and winning is about as satisfying as a stick insect supermodel's breakfast.

One minute you're encased in a heavily armoured vehicle, feeling safer than a stray dog in a vegetarian restaurant; the next a dot on your radar shoots towards you. Soon after, an enemy vehicle appears and, while you're clumsily faffing around trying desperately to line it up in your sights, it unleashes a fat missile that blows half your chassis to smithereens. The whole encounter took just a couple of seconds. You're left wondering if it was worth the effort.

Bikes mix it up with the rest of the motors

HIDE AND SEEK

There's nothing remotely complicated about Mayhem. Simply select your motorised mauler, enter an arena and unleash destruction on anything that moves. The multi-levelled arenas have you hitting mega jumps, bouncing all over the gaff, blasting through walls, and picking up the kind of weapons that make Duke Nukem smile. But even in multiplayer the gameplay feels sloppy and there's little to get excited about. Surely nowadays it takes more than huge weapons and futuristic weirdos to satisfy.

CVG RECKONS

Unless the finished result tightens up gameplay, with more controlled and longer battles, Mayhem's ass will be seriously whupped by Twisted Metal Black. Mike C

SPY HUNTER

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **SEPTEMBER** DEVELOPER: **MIDWAY** PUBLISHER: **MIDWAY**

Spy Hunter was an early Eighties coin-op boasting around eight glorious colours and about the same variety in the gameplay. Zoom forward to present day and it's back, sporting shiny cars, colourful explosions and a pumping soundtrack that the original never had. Just one problem though – the gameplay's still stuck firm in the past.

SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED

The first few minutes of play leave you wondering if this could be everything 007 Racing was not. Imagine Bond-style car chases, with you thrashing it down a road, speeding after an enemy agent whose motor you've got to ventilate with your machine gun. Then there are the countless thugs, who you've got to ram off the road.

Good looks won't hide limited gameplay

Your car morphs into a bike when it's knackered

Your car is kitted out with weapons such as oil slicks, rockets and machine guns, and also has the handy knack of transforming into a boat for the water sections. It'll even turn into an escape bike when you've taken too much damage and need to get away to your HQ truck for repairs.

And with speed equalling ten Linford Christies and more firepower than a John Woo movie, Spy Hunter is certainly going to arrive with a bang. But we still have concerns that the gameplay could be too simplistic.

There are ramps to jump, barriers to smash through and short cuts to find, but it often boils down to driving in a straight line, blowing things up. Yup, good shooting skills are more important than masterful driving, and while this bodes well for pick-up-and-playability, the longer-term prospects aren't so promising.

There are plenty of vehicles and tons of weapons

Rockets will destroy what bullets can't

CVG RECKONS

Could be a bit like the current eighties pop revival – a cool idea, but maybe it's best left in the past. Les

The flycam shows off the huge environments

Control droids as well as human operatives

There's a nice bit of blood in there, too

PROJECT EDEN

FORMAT: **PS2/PC** OUT: **OCTOBER** DEVELOPER: **CORE DESIGN** PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

The Garden of Eden was by all accounts an Earthly paradise where Adam and his God-given partner Eve frolicked in innocent, naked bliss among leafy groves and lush glades until the lure of a nice Golden Delicious spoiled it all.

But this Eden is a futuristic hell-hole that's more mega-slum than mega-city, where mutants roam the streets baying for blood and roof-top snipers lurk, ready to blow decent folk away just for laughs. Not quite what the Good Lord had in mind, then.

FOUR INTO ONE

To investigate what's causing the breakdown of the city, you guide four uniquely skilled and heavily armed agents through a series of team-based puzzles and hardcore shoot-outs.

While Eden may look like an all-out action game, it's got quite a bit in common with PC strategy titles like Commandos in the way you have to use each team member's skills and gadgets to complete missions. Either that or rope in three mates to help out in the awesome-sounding multiplayer mode.

Quite a jump in gaming skill is needed from your average console action game (especially in one-player), but if you're patient enough to make that leap, Eden really grows on you. Though we experienced a few wobbly moments getting to grips with the controls and command interface, the action sits happily somewhere between a PC and PlayStation action game and should go some way to restoring the reputation of team-based console actioners after the disappointment of X-Squad.

Co-ordinate your squad well

CVG RECKONS

More gadgets than Bond and more depth than Lara Croft's cleavage. Could be a winner. Lee

"More undead action and far less frustration"

You're dead. Can it really get any worse? Well, in the world of ShadowMan, the answer is yes because a voodoo priestess has burned a black magic mask into your chest and turned you into an undead demon hunter.

Charged with travelling back and forth from hell with a legless ex-cop and assorted voodoo freaks as your only help, you have to deal with a badass demon called Asmodeus and the legions of Grigori. Death doesn't seem so bad after all now, does it?

SHADOWMAN 2: 2ND COMING

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **SEPTEMBER** DEVELOPER: **ACCLAIM STUDIOS** PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**

WANDERING AND WONDERING

Anyone who remembers the last ShadowMan game will remember with a grimace the way you had to wander (and wonder) through levels, getting hopelessly lost and trying to figure out where to go, what to do and then how to do it when you got there. Thankfully, with SM2 you get a straightforward linear mission: you do it, then you come back for more. So no more wrecking your joypad in frustration, whether you're finding a portal in a plantation or locking horns with demons in a prison. Which is a relief.

LEROI, KING CORPSE KILLER

One thing remains constant whether you're travelling through modern day Louisiana to reach the plantation, or the prison at Gehenna, the icy forest at Tarkovskaya, the haunted Herne House (not for the weak of heart) or the assassin-infested Fortress of Alymot. And that is the full-on, non-stop, fry-more-demon-ass-than-God-himself action.

Seeing as Mike Leroi travels between the living and dead worlds, it's a good job he's equipped with weaponry to do the damage in this world and the next. Pistols, shotguns and machetes transform into Deadside versions when you visit the other side, though the effect on dead souls is much the same as the living. Throw in special powers like the ability to launch storms at any zombies in your way and you pack a pretty nasty punch – for a dead guy.

Hmm, it looks like they weren't lying when they said drinking too many cans of Coke will rot your guts

That'll teach you to order the lobster in Satan's Cafe. Leroi kicks ass, Deadside

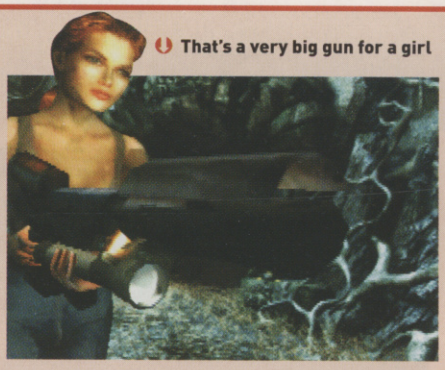
LEARNED THEIR LESSONS

ShadowMan 2 is coming on in leaps and bounds since we last saw anything half a year back. The levels are fully populated with the spawn of Satan and there's much more to do on each stage than when we last took a peek. And what's far more apparent now is Acclaim hasn't just paid lip-service to player criticism of the original, it is actually busting a gut to make the changes you demanded. Which means more concise levels, specific quests and more focused action. We can't wait.

CVG RECKONS

Dark, evil, nasty, satanic and violent? Yes please. Plenty of frantic blasting and exploring with a healthy dose of quests and missions – and it's nowhere near as frustrating as before. Just what the witch doctor ordered. Les

Aline's plasma gun is super-sweet for frying zombie flesh like so much undead bacon



That's a very big gun for a girl

No sunbathing for Edward on the beach, just killing giant scorpions scuttling among the rocks

ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **OCTOBER** DEVELOPER: **DARKWORKS** PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

The nightmare is everywhere – there is no escape. It's been crawling relentlessly into the gaming world and has been warping minds the world over. No matter what your games machine of choice, there's no hiding from Alone in the Dark.

With the game available on so many formats, Infogrames' horror spectacle is more persistent than a Jehova's Witness. But the big question on everyone's trembling lips is this: what's new in the PS2 version that you can't get for a couple of quid cheaper somewhere else?

THE SAME, BUT SHINIER

The answer is not all that much. Sure, there are a bunch of aesthetic differences between the two PlayStation versions, including souped-up visuals to make sure the blood runs even more freely and more deliciously, but the game plays out exactly the same as previous incarnations. Of course, this is hardly a problem when the game is as entertaining to play as AITD is, and PS2 owners who haven't played it on another format can start getting very excited. Fancy visuals aside, anyone who's played this AITD before will be left feeling conned and wanting much more.

The gloomy marshes are full of ghostly crocs

CVG RECKONS

Not for anyone who's played it on another format, but could be great for AITD newbies. Lee

X-MEN: MUTANT ACADEMY

FORMAT: **PSONE** OUT: **SEPT 21** DEVELOPER: **PARADOX** PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Storm, the sexy mutant with lightning reflexes, is booted 50 feet in the air like a rag doll. Not a nice way to treat a lady. But hey, you're Beast, and manners were never one of you strong points. But, being a super mutant, Storm gets back up and opens a special six-pack of whupass with a series of lightning attacks that knock you clean out. Just another ordinary day for the X-Men.

BARELY MUTATED

In much the same tradition as the Street Fighter series on DC, X-Men 2 keeps the gameplay almost identical to its predecessor – which isn't the best of ideas considering it wasn't all that hot in the first place. Changes come in the form of six new lycra-wearing combatants, including Rogue and Nightcrawler, six new arenas, some new attacks, and the introduction of aerial combat. Nice, but hardly major stuff.

Thing is, the original wasn't that great compared to class bruisers like Tekken 3, so this sequel is going have to hit hard to make ammends.

There's nothing like a good old bitch fight

Aerial combat is one of the few additions in Mutant Academy 2

CVG RECKONS

Looks nice, but we're not convinced by the simple special attacks and average combo system. Mike C

FIFA 2002

FORMAT: **PS2, PS1, PC** OUT: **AUTUMN 2001** DEVELOPER: **EA SPORTS** PUBLISHER: **EA SPORTS**

Celtic versus Roma? Not likely

Give him the eyebrows and knock it into the channel where the striker's run path is marked

You can rest assured all the world's most famous players will be present. But who's this guy?

Conventional wisdom dictates that you can't polish a turd. However, EA Sports has proved otherwise over the years, thanks to the mammoth commercial success that is the basically pretty bad FIFA series. Their latest boast is that game has made more money than Star Wars, though given the frequency of its release, that's hardly surprising.

"This time, things will be different. No, really..."

SAME MEAT

Another year, another FIFA. But wait – what's this? A zoomed-out view, arrows all over the pitch, players using space, through balls...? It's true. Read it and weep. This year's FIFA is actually going to be different. Believe it or not, the gameplay has been noticeably changed, and while you might consider this a requisite of spending forty pounds, in FIFA terms it's the equivalent of the Berlin Wall coming down.

Get on the end of that, lad. White boots all round

Can you guess where's he's going to run? At least this FIFA will have some genuine changes

Not the most useful of camera angles, but it sure looks good

DIFFERENT GRAVY

Gone is the simplistic pass-shoot-score routine, replaced by a more sophisticated tactical approach that actually requires you to think. That's the idea anyway, and while initial dabbles resulted in moribund 0-0 draws, it soon became evident that sprinting into the area from the kick-off and hammering the ball goalwards usually produced results.

Clearly, this is one area that will need to be tightened up, but it seems that the developer has finally taken criticisms on board and is attempting to create a more rounded game. And about bleedin' time.

CVG RECKONS

For the purist, it's never going to replace ISS, but EA Sports is at least trying something different. Whatever happens, it'll sell shedloads.
Steve H

F1 2001

FORMAT: **PC, PS2** OUT: **AUTUMN 2001** DEVELOPER: **IMAGE SPACE INCORPORATED (PC), EA SPORTS (PS2)** PUBLISHER: **EA SPORTS**

Cynics may deride it as little more than a fast-moving tobacco endorsement, but there's no denying the glamour of Formula One. Let's face it, any sport involving Jordan gets our vote. What? The pneumatic bint's got nothing to do with F1? Well, sod it then.

GOES LIKE A HAIRDRYER

Anyway, the news is that PC and PS2 players are to be treated to brand new F1 games in the shape of F1 2001, both featuring this season's data. Essentially two separate projects, the PC game is aimed at the kind of player who has a hairdryer fitted on his monitor to recreate wind resistance, while the PS2 version is for more action-hungry thrill seekers.

With all four wheels clearly planted in the simulation camp, the PC game is a bold attempt at realism, and one best approached with a steering wheel and pedals.

Initially frustrating, it's worth persevering with, and even at this early stage it proved an exhilarating experience. We were lucky enough to go head to head with Jordan's third driver,

PC: The Jordans ahead of the McLarens?

PC: Welcome to Silverstone. No rain at least

Ricardo Zonta, to whom we administered an almighty pasting. Guess that's why he's number three. To be fair, following some tweaking to his car's setup, he returned later and promptly posted the fastest lap of the day. If it's good enough for him, it's good enough for you.

"Realism for the PC and thrills 'n' spills for PS2"

PS2: No overtaking, this is Monaco. It looks pretty good but the PC version takes the biscuit

PS2: The Arrows car (actual speed shown)

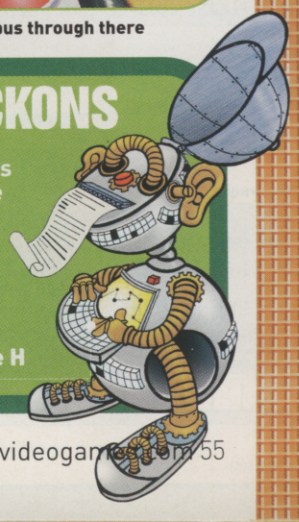
PS2 4 U?

As for the PS2 version, it definitely suffered in comparison to its PC counterpart, and not only visually. It's designed to be more action-packed and less realistic, so if you're looking to plough through the field within the first lap, cut through chicanes, and barge other drivers off the track, then this is for you. Horses for courses. Or cars.

PS2: You could get a bus through there

CVG RECKONS

The PC version is shaping up to be the benchmark for realism in racing games, while the PS2 game could just prove another wannabe. Steve H



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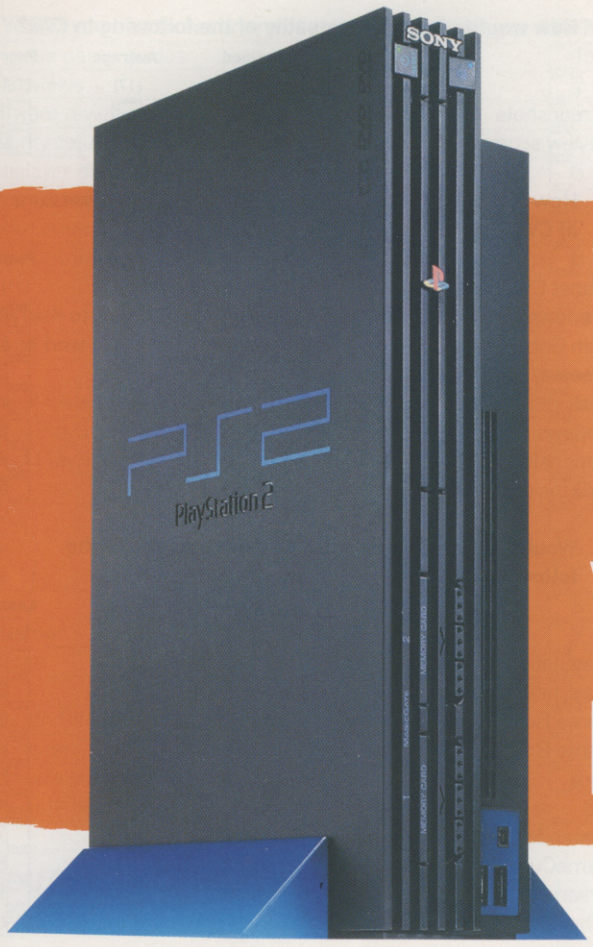

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Simply complete and return this survey to the FREEPOST address (no stamp required!) given at the end of the questionnaire before 18th September 2001 and your name will be entered into the prize draw.

Ubi Soft ENTERTAINMENT

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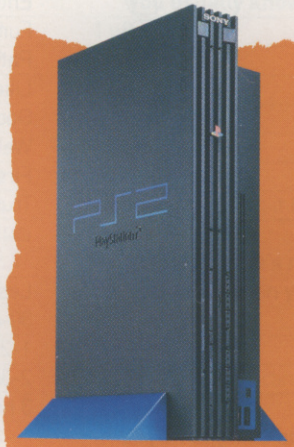

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5 RUNNERS-UP

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G110XMF

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On subscription	☐1 (6)
Retailer – every month	☐2
Retailer – most months	☐3
Retailer – occasionally	☐4

2. If you buy CVG from a retailer, from which of the following do you normally purchase your copy?

Supermarket	☐1 (7)
WH Smith	☐2
Local newsagent	☐3
Other newsagent	☐4
Games store (eg Electronics Boutique)	☐5

3. What makes you buy CVG? (Tick any)

Content	☐1 (8)
Free cover gifts	☐2
Lead cover story	☐3
CVG game exclusive	☐4

4. How do you rate CVG as value for money?

Good	☐1 (9)
Bad	☐2
Indifferent	☐3

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Frisbee	☐8
Stickers	☐9
Collectable game characters	☐o
Gaming Calender	☐x
Mini football	☐v
DVD of demos	☐1 (11)
Music CD	☐2

6. What is your overall opinion of CVG?

Excellent	☐1 (12)
Good	☐2
Average	☐3
Poor	☐4

7. How do you rate the new overall layout and design of CVG?

Better	☐1 (13)
Same	☐2
Worse than before	☐3

8. When looking at CVG, what do you tend to look at first?

Pictures	☐1 (14)
Text	☐2
Both evenly	☐3

9. What do you think of the balance of pictures to text?

About right	☐1 (15)
Too many pictures	☐2
Too much text	☐3

10. How would you rate the quality of the following in CVG?

	Good (16)	Average (17)	Poor (18)
Screenshots	☐1	☐1	☐1
Review scores	☐2	☐2	☐2

11. How would you rate the quality of the following sections of CVG?

	Good (19)	Average (20)	Poor (21)
Planet CVG (News)	☐1	☐1	☐1
Previews	☐2	☐2	☐2
Coin Gobbler (Arcades)	☐3	☐3	☐3
Freeplay	☐4	☐4	☐4
Features (Death By Arcade, etc)	☐5	☐5	☐5
Reviews	☐6	☐6	☐6
Handhelds	☐7	☐7	☐7
CVG Insider			

12. Would you like to see more or less coverage of the following in CVG?

	More (22)	Same (23)	Less (24)
PlayStation 1	☐1	☐1	☐1
PlayStation 2	☐2	☐2	☐2
Game Boy Advance	☐3	☐3	☐3
Game Boy Color	☐4	☐4	☐4
Xbox	☐5	☐5	☐5
PC	☐6	☐6	☐6
Nintendo 64	☐7	☐7	☐7
GameCube	☐8	☐8	☐8
Dreamcast	☐9	☐9	☐9
Other	☐o	☐o	☐o

13. Which of the following words would you use to describe the CVG magazine and website?

	Magazine (25)	Website (26)
Easy to read	☐1	☐1
Informative	☐2	☐2
Entertaining	☐3	☐3
Funny	☐4	☐4
Patronising	☐5	☐5
Like a mate	☐6	☐6
Good design	☐7	☐7
Well written	☐8	☐8
First for exclusives	☐9	☐9
Trustworthy reviews	☐o	☐o

14. About how long did you spend reading this copy of CVG?

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30-60 minutes	☐2
1-2 hours	☐3
2-3 hours	☐4
3 hours or more	☐5

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I keep it for reference	☐1 (28)
I keep parts for reference	☐2
I pass it on to others	☐3
Other	☐4

16. How many other people read your copy of CVG?

None	☐1 (29)
1	☐2
2	☐3
3	☐4
More than 3	☐5

17. Would you like to see more of any of the following in CVG?

Complete game guides	1 (30)
DVD reviews	2
Hardware reviews	3
Celebrity columns	4
Multiplayer gaming	5
Online gaming section	6
Reader events	7
Reader involvement (eg, competitions, reviews, letters)	8

18. Which of the following other magazines do you buy and how often?

	Regularly	Occasionally	Never
GamesMaster	1 (31)	1 (32)	1 (33)
Official PlayStation Magazine	2	2	2
Official PlayStation Magazine 2	3	3	3
PSW	4	4	4
PSM 2	5	5	5
Max	6	6	6
Play	7	7	7
P2	8	8	8
PC Gamer	9	9	9
PC Zone	o	o	o
N64	x	x	x
Nintendo Official Magazine	v	v	v
Max Power	1 (34)	1 (35)	1 (36)
Any men's lifestyle magazine (eg Maxim, FHM etc)	2	2	2

ABOUT YOUR CONSOLE & GAMING

19. Which of the following do you own/intend to buy?

	Own	Intend to buy
PlayStation 1	1 (37)	1 (38)
PlayStation 2	2	2
Game Boy Advance	3	3
Game Boy Color	4	4
Xbox		5
PC	5	6
Nintendo 64	6	7
GameCube		8
Dreamcast	7	9
Other	8	o

20. Of any of the machines you own or your friends have, which do you... (A) Use most? (B) Also use?

	(A)	(B)
PlayStation 1	1 (39)	1 (40)
PlayStation 2	2	2
Game Boy Advance	3	3
Game Boy Color	4	4
PC	5	5
Nintendo 64	6	6
Dreamcast	7	7
Other	8	8

21. How many hours a week do you spend playing games?

Less than 5 hours	1 (41)
5-10 hours	2
10-15 hours	3
15-20 hours	4
20 hours or more	5

22. What types of console games do you play? (Tick all that apply)

Action	1 (42)
Adventure	2
Sports	3
Strategy	4
Simulations	5
Role playing	6
Arcade	7
Driving	8
War	9
Puzzle	o
Online games	x
Beat 'em ups	v

23. Which of the following games are you most excited about?

Metal Gear Solid 2	1 (43)
Luigi's Mansion	2
Final Fantasy X	3
Buffy The Vampire Slayer	4
Tekken 4	5
Mario Kart Advance	6
WWF Smackdown! 3	7
Star Wars Rogue Leader	8
Maximo	9
Stuntman	o
Star Fox Adventures	x

24. When gaming, do you tend to...

Play on your own	1 (44)
Play with your mates	2
Play with family/brothers/sisters	3

25. Where do you do most of your gaming?

Bedroom	1 (45)
Living room	2
Other room	3
On the go (eg Game Boy Advance)	4

26. About how long before a game is available in shops do you usually know about it?

1 week	1 (46)
1 month	2
3 months	3
6 months	4
1 year	5
2 years or more	6
I don't know about it before I see it in shops	7

27. When a game's release date is postponed, does it confuse you as to when you'll be able to buy the game?

Yes	1 (47)
No	2
Don't know/don't care	3

28. A game you are interested in buying has received a mediocre review score, but you see a good advert for it. Do you...

Definitely buy it	1 (48)
Consider buying it	2
Definitely not buy it	3

29. What do you use the Internet for?

Playing online games	1 (49)
Downloading games	2
Downloading other software	3
Downloading media, eg MP3	4
Shopping	5
Finance	6
Email	7
General news	8
Sports news	9
Information/research	o
Booking holidays/activities	x

30. Have you accessed the CVG website (www.computerandvideogames.com)?

Yes	1 (50)
No	2
Didn't know it existed	3

31. About how often do you access the CVG website?

Daily	1 (51)
Weekly	2
Fortnightly	3
Monthly	4

WHAT CONSOLE & PERIPHERALS DO YOU OWN?

32. Which of the following types of peripherals do you own or intend to buy?

	Own	Intend to buy
Joypad	1 (52)	1 (53)
Steering wheel	2	2
Lightgun	3	3
Dancing mat	4	4
Link cables	5	5
Memory cards	6	6
Carry cases	7	7
Other/specialist (eg pool cue)	8	8

33. How much do you usually spend on console/PC games in a month?

Nothing	1 (54)
Less than £10	2
£10-£20	3
£20-£40	4
£40-£60	5
£60 or more	6

34. How many console/PC games do you usually buy in a month?

None	1 (55)
1	2
2	3
3	4
4 or more	5

35. When a big game is launched, about how soon do you normally buy it?

1st week	1 (56)
1st fortnight	2
1st month	3
1st 3 months	4
When it comes down in price	5

36. Do you rent games?

Yes	1 (57)
No	2

37. Which of the following influence your decision to buy console/PC games?

Advertising	1 (58)
Review in CVG	2
Review in other mags	3
Review on the Internet	4
Review on TV/radio	5
Word of mouth	6
Games demo	7

38. Where do you typically buy:

(A) Games software (B) Games hardware	(A)	(B)
Mail order	1 (59)	1 (60)
Online	2	2
Computer superstore	3	3
Electronics Boutique	4	4
HMV	5	5
Virgin	6	6
Woolworths	7	7
Game	8	8
WH Smith	9	9
Supermarket	o	o
Blockbuster	x	x
Independent Games store	v	v

39. Have you ever purchased something as a result of seeing it reviewed or advertised in CVG?

	Review	Advert
Yes	1 (61)	1 (62)
No	2	2

ABOUT YOU

40. What is your sex?

Male	1 (63)
Female	2

41. How old are you?

701	Under 7	1 (64)
701	7-10	2
701	11-14	3
702	15-19	4
703	20-24	5
704	25+	6

42. How much money do you have to spend each week?

Under £2	1 (65)
£2-5	2
£5-10	3
£10-20	4
£20-40	5
£40 or over	6

READER SURVEY COMPETITION

Thank you for your participation and time. In order to be entered into the FREE prize draw please fill in your details below, and return your survey to our freepost address by 18th September 2001. (All usual competition rules apply)

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

EMAIL

DAYTIME PHONE NO.

☐ Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers from companies other than Dennis Publishing OR if you are under 18 years of age.

Please return to: CVG Reader Survey 2001, Freepost WD7, Bristol BS32 0ZZ

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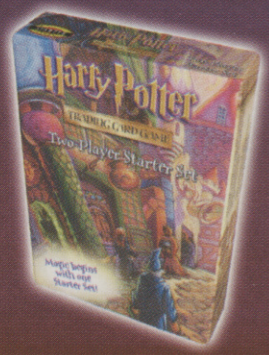

Harry Potter
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"Where the hell are the

For once, a film based on a game isn't getting universally slagged. One posh US critic even gushed The Spirits Within is the birth of a new cinema genre. That's all fine for highbrow movie buffs, but what about us gamers? After all, Final Fantasy kind of belongs to the RPGers who bought it by the lorry-load, doesn't it? If we hadn't pushed worldwide sales past the 30 million mark, the movie would never have got made.

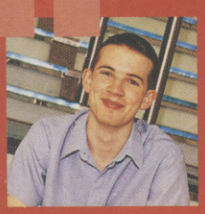
So despite the film's technical excellence, has it got what it takes to keep us demanding players happy? Look at the games. They are imaginative fantasy adventures set on distant worlds. The other-worldly characters are full of imagination and use similar magical powers you begin to recognise from episode to episode.

Then look at the movie. It's more a traditional sci-fi epic set on Earth. The characters are slightly stereotypical humans straight out of a Hollywood blockbuster who know about as much magic as Paul Daniels.

So to find out whether The Spirits Within is in the spirit of the game or not and whether this will be the Final Fantasy us gamers will want to see at the movies, CVG took handful of competition winners along to a special preview at the Odeon Leicester Square to get the player's verdict.

Photography: Mike Harding

The plush Odeon Leicester Square where we took the lucky winners... but did they weep with joy at the beauty of the movie, or fall asleep in their popcorn?



STEVEN MILLER

Would it be harsh to say that my favourite part was the Spider-Man trailer? It was better than I thought it would be. I'm not a big Final Fantasy fan, so maybe I'd have enjoyed it more if I was. The special effects were great and the bodies were really well done. When there were running scenes and you couldn't see the faces you could've mistaken it for real life. I think the men were actually better animated than Aki was. Sometimes you could really tell that she was computer generated. They've got a little bit further to go before they can stop paying people like Tom Hanks.

SHAUN RUTLAND

I didn't think that Aki had much sex appeal, and the film was pretty cheesy at times, but it was quite entertaining. The plot was fairly average – I didn't think it was anything different. It reminded me a bit of Akira with the world getting overtaken by some massive unknown thing. They did have the typical Final Fantasy jumping scene though, where the characters had to jump and land on things. The effects were incredible though – definitely the best effects I've seen to date. You've got the freedom to create pretty much whatever you want with CGI.

PAULO PISSANI

The film was great. I'm a big FF fan and I think it will draw a lot of people to the games, but they will generally be disappointed. I think they've exploited the Final Fantasy name. There are no Chocobos, no Mogs. It's worthy of Square but it's not the same saga as the games. Each of the FF games may have very little in common with each other, but there's always something linking them. They could have given just a little wink to the fans of FF games in the film. The special effects were brilliant. When the characters were moving they looked real. Tom Hanks should be afraid.

This month Final Fantasy hits the silver screen. But while all the hype has been about how these artificial actors are going to put Hollywood megastars out of a job, what we want to ask is:

Chocobos?"

JAMES DODD
I thoroughly enjoyed it, but it went on a bit too long. They could have done with cutting about 20 minutes out. They got a bit wound up with the whole 'spirits' scenario and I was left wondering 'what exactly is going on?' They needed to leave us to comprehend what it was instead of gabbling on for ages and ages. It was beautiful to look at though, amazing. I watched Shrek the other week and I thought that was amazing, but this stunned me. We want PlayStation 3 if it's going to look like that! It was really disconcerting, because occasionally it looks so real. But they still can't do mouths, though.

PAUL MILLER
It was more enjoyable than I thought it would be. There were a lot more scenes where I was actually enjoying just watching and I wasn't really thinking about it. The plot was overdone and it was a bit complicated in places. It's still not really up to a real action film as far as I'm concerned. It lacked the realism of a live action film. The effects are absolutely great – the best I've seen in a movie – but you feel the realism of a live action film with real actors and real stuntmen much more. The characters seemed to lack the personal touch of real actors' emotions.

CVG RECKONS

The darkly brooding cyberpunk vibe of FF:TSW is unlike anything seen before in Final Fantasy. Sometimes it's reminiscent of Blade Runner, Resident Evil and Aliens – more sci-fi horror than sword and sorcery. FF: TSW looks set to forge a new direction for both movies and games. It may not be quite what FF fans are expecting, and the dialogue is a tad one-dimensional, but it's still a head-spinningly revolutionary experience that no gaming or anime fan should miss.

Dreamcast.

orange

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FREEPLAY

WHO'S THE DADDY NOW?

You came, you challenged, you lost. Dan thrashed all-comers at Quake III and Alex kept knocking 'em in the net in ISS Evolution 2. Come on lads, we want you to show us how good at games you are, to prove you're the joypad dons. Next time we throw down the gauntlet, give us a real challenge. This month, get good at GT3, or grab as many rings as possible in Sonic Adventure 2. And, if you're still not that hot, check out all the cheats we've crammed in The Doghouse. Are we good to you or what?

Do you want your 15 minutes of fame in CVG's Freeplay? Then get your high scores, challenges and opinions to us now! Write to: Freeplay, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. Or email us at: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

YOUR SHOUT

Got something to say about games we've reviewed? Totally agree or violently disagree? Then feed us your spleen in 100 words or less. Include a score (out of ten), your details and maybe a picture of yourself. Or email us at mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

7 BLADES
Format: PS2
Reviewed: Issue 236
Score: 3/5

WHAT WE SAID:
"If you're after simple, adrenaline-fuelled beat 'em up action, you'll get into 7 Blades. Everything it does, it does pretty well, and for those with short attention spans it's perfect eye-candy. If you want depth, even in fighting games, you'll come away disappointed."

YOU RECKON:
"7 Blades is a rubbish game, and a let-down for the PS2. Its poor combat system makes it frustrating to play as loads of enemies attack you at once and you can't cope. You can even complete a level by running through the battles." 4/10. **Kyle Brown, Nottingham**

DARK CLOUD
Format: PS2
Reviewed: Issue 236
Score: 3/5

WHAT WE SAID:
"Dark Cloud is great for a while and the beautiful visuals and unusual gameplay will be enough for patient and forgiving players to see past the flaws... Softer-hearted gamers will likely find this a pleasing way to spend £30, but everyone else will find the thrill of adventuring dwindles all too soon. Shame."

YOU RECKON:

"Dark Cloud had the potential to be a best-selling game, but there are too many problems. There are great things about it, like the story, graphics, diorama modes and puzzles, but the bad things outweigh them. The levels are too long and tedious, the items and weapons systems are poor, and the game pace is so slow that it just becomes too boring and monotonous! Dark Cloud is a disappointment." 5/10
Thomas Sichel, London

CHART ATTACK

CVG
What's turning us on

1	Tekken 4 (ARC)
2	Final Fantasy X (PS2)
3	Winning Eleven 5 (PS2)
4	Castlevania (GBA)
5	GT3 (PS2)
6	Bomberman Tournament (GBC)
7	Sheep, Dog 'n' Wolf (PSone)
8	Sonic Adventure 2 (DC)
9	Red Faction (PS2)
10	Tony Hawk's 2 (GBA)

READER
Craig Bellows likes these games

1	Final Fantasy IX (PSone)
2	ZOE (PS2)
3	Dance Stage Euromix (PSone)
4	Onimusha (PS2)
5	Black & White (PC)
6	Tekken Tag (PS2)
7	TimeSpiltters (PS2)
8	Zelda: Majora's Mask (N64)
9	Tony Hawk's 2 (PSone)
10	Pokemon Gold (GBC)

TOP TEN RPGs
The best role-players for your cash

1	Zelda: Ocarina Of Time (N64)
2	Pokemon Gold/Silver (GBC)
3	Final Fantasy VII (PSone)
4	Zelda: Majora's Mask (N64)
5	Final Fantasy IX (PS)
6	Baldur's Gate II (PC)
7	Zelda DX (GBC)
8	Zelda (SNES)
9	Vagrant Story (PSone)
10	Diablo II (PC)

BEST SELLERS
What's been flying off the shelves

1	Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec (PS2)
2	Tony Hawk's 2 (GBA)
3	Super Mario Advance (GBA)
4	Pokemon Gold (GBC)
5	Onimusha (PS2)
6	Driver (PSone)
7	Pokemon Silver (GBC)
8	Microsoft Train Simulator (PC)
9	Operation Flashpoint (PC)
10	Red Faction (PS2)

Best Sellers supplied by Leisure software charts, compiled by ChartTrack, (C) 2001 ELSPA (UK) Ltd

HUNTER'S MAILBAG

Got something to say? We'll let you shout it out to the world. Just put pen to paper and send your thoughts to: Hunter's Mailbag, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF, or email: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

'Cos I'm the only one here wot can read proper, It's me wot chooses your letters. Write sumfink good and I'll give it a bone. Write sumfink crap and I'll coil one off on it.

GOLDEN BONE

NO POINTS FOR ORIGINALITY

I think the reason Sega finished last in the console wars is that people don't like originality. It seems people would rather play Fifa after Fifa after Fifa than play original tiles such as Bass Fishing, NiGHTS or Power Stone. People SAY they want originality, but what it comes down to is that no-one will pay for it. Dreamcast deserved to do better: it was cheap, had a modem (built-in), the best Resident Evil game and the best fighting game ever made – Soul Calibur.

Daniel 'the dudefather' Mcfarline, N.Ireland

CVG: *And let's not forget Shenmue and Crazy Taxi. Yep, rest in peace Dreamcast, you had some top games. Still, Sega will be getting down with other consoles from now on, so expect tons more original titles from them, just not on the the ol' Dreamcast, that's all.*

BAN FREE CHOICE!

Why can't Nintendo, Sega and Sony all combine to make the ultimate console, then everyone would buy that and no-one could say their console was better because it would be exactly the same.

Will Taylor, London

CVG: *Yeh, and maybe Nike and Reebok could combine to make the 'ultimate' trainer and McDonald's and Burger King could buddy up for the 'ultimate' burger, and we could all walk around looking the same, like dumbass robots.*

SAMUS IS EVER WAS

In your latest issue you stated that Samus Aran was a 'he' whereas you should know Samus is female. Not telling you your job or anything, I just thought readers should know Lara Croft wasn't the first videogame queen. While I'm here, any chance of bringing back Dave Kelsall's retro computer cabin, as it brought back so many good memories of the days of gameplay over graphics. Keep up the good work.

Scouser, via email

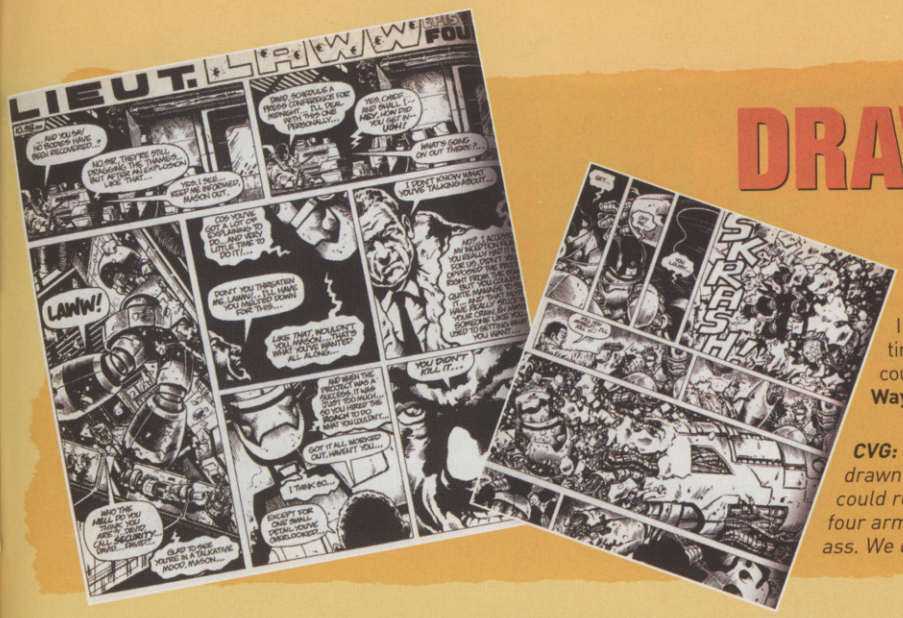
CVG: *Sadly, Dave Kelsall is in prison serving 20 to life, purely for the crime of being a bit of a geek so you'll have to check Action Replay on page 69 for all your crusty game thrills. Big shout out to you and all the boys on B-wing, Dave.*

BRING BACK FREEPLAY. WHOOPS.

In my hand I have issue 196 of CVG (March 1998) and two questions come to mind: 1. What happened to Freeplay? So many people loved and now miss the entertainment that it brought. Go to: www.geocities.com/cvg_freeplay/ to sign the petition to bring it back. 2. What is the old CVG team up to now? Paul Davies, Tom Guise, Ed Lomas (Big hippy girl), Steve Key, Alex Huhtala, Jamie Smith and Tony Cormack. They just seemed to disappear off the face of the earth. I hope you can help me with my questions.

Matt Cox, Manchester

CVG: *Freeplay? Your letter was a month late. We've only gone and introduced it already! D'oh! As for the old CVGers, let's see. Paul Davies, Tom Guise and Alex Huhtala all wear dressing gowns and write for us; Steve Key models for Vileda Supermops; Tony Cormack grew wings and learnt to fly high; Jaime Smith lost millions selling micro-scooters, and Ed Lomas cut his hair and looks like a fool.*



DRAWINZ WOT WE DID

I remember a comic strip in your mag from a long time ago called Lieut Laww and was wondering if you could dig up any info on it.
Wayne, via email

CVG: *It was cool, wasn't it? It appeared in 1987, was drawn by Jerry Paris and CVG was the only place you could read it. It featured a law enforcement droid with four arms who went round kicking a serious amount of ass. We don't know much more.*

HE'D RATHER JACK

In issue 236 of your mag, you featured a Game Boy Advance with a Union Jack on it and I was wondering where you got this from and if it was official Nintendo or a clip-on cover similar to those for mobile phones.

Please could you tell me where you got it from as I would love to get one for myself.
James Worrall

CVG: *Sorry, you can't buy the Union Jack GBA in the shops because we invented it and then Dan rigged it up on his computer. It's like magic, only without the women in leotards. Then again, knowing Dan...*

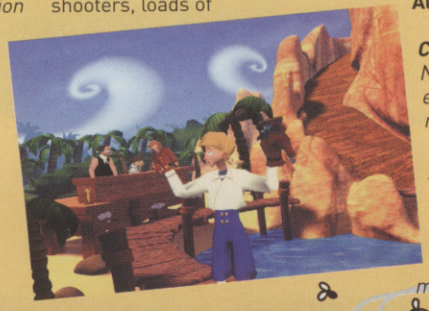
MAN WITH A PROBLEM

Aaarrggh! What are you doing marking games out of 10? Can't you remember that a few years ago there was a big debate about scoring games and CVG decided marks out of five were the way forward? What's the difference between six out of ten or seven out of ten? Is a game that scores three out of ten better than a game that scores two? Bring back the 5 stars!
Chris Reilly, Birmingham
P.S. Great to see Freeplay back.

CVG: *Yeah, it's something we think about a lot, and after a considered debate and many hours spent playing Paper, Scissors, Stone, we decided marks out of ten gave us more leeway. But hey, if you prefer marks out of five, just divide the mark we give it by two. Easy, innit?*

WHAT'S THE POINT?

I was looking around my local game store the other day when I thought to myself, there are loads of football games, loads of first-person shooters, loads of stupid games and far too many racing games. But not enough good old-fashioned point-and-click puzzle games. They seem to have vanished. What do you reckon?
Sam Windle, via email



CVG: *We're not paid to think Sam, we're paid to work like slaves until the day we take a dirt-nap. But we like the occasional 'pointy clicky' as well and we think Escape From Monkey Island on the PS2 is worth a look – it ain't half bad.*

I STUDY CVG *TOO* HARD

A weird question here, but me being the techno freak I am, I just have to know the answer. In issue 236, on page 44 one of the pictures really puzzled me. On the right of the computer monitor in the main picture there was a funky box type thingy with a Sega badge on it. What the hell is it?
Alex G

CVG: *Well spotted, Alex. Nothing gets past your eagle eyes, does it? Bet you also noticed that time when we spelt 'shut' with an 'i', didn't you? For your information, the machine is a Dreamcast development machine that helps us take pictures from DC games. Ho-hum, won't be needing that for much longer.*

SHORT STUFF

Wow!!!! You have taken a great magazine and IMPROVED it; thanks for bringing back Hunter and keep up the good work.
Mark Daniel

Oi, do not change your magazine. I hate it when magazines do that, it spoils everything. I love CVG as it is, and I'm sure everyone else does too. Leave it.
Disgruntled

CVG: *It seems you just can't please all of the people all of the time.*

CVG STINKER

WARNING: THIS LETTER PONGS, BIG TIME!

A while back my Dad bought an internet filter that only allows me on the internet for a limited time a day which is terrible! Now I can only play on Alien Adoption Agency for an hour! Of course, being the person I am, I hacked into it and gave myself infinite time. When my Dad found out he changed it back, but this time he took the pads out of the PlayStation and N64 but the fool forgot about my Dreamcast (which was in my brother's room). So of course, I was never seen outside of my brother's bedroom and my Dad thought I wasn't getting enough exercise so he took those pads too. I don't know when I'm getting them back and I want to play on Res Evil and I'm sooooo bored! Anyway, just thought you might want to know.
BBQeagle

CVG: *WRONG! We DID NOT want to know. And you know what? We think your achingly dull letter was your just way of gloating that you're a spoilt git and you've got a PC, PlayStation, N64 and a Dreamcast! It's like, "Woah, check me and my consoles out!" The door's that way, posh boy, now go get some freakin' exercise.*

HAVE YOUR SAY

On our poll-tastic website over the past few weeks we've been asking you guys whether you own a PS2, and if not when are you thinking (if at all) of getting one. These are the results:

ALREADY OWN ONE	44%
DON'T WANT ONE	38%
IF THERE'S A PRICE DROP BY XMAS	8%
DEFINITELY BEFORE XMAS	7%
SOMETIME AFTER XMAS	3%

SMASH IT UP

KILL ALL PANTS PERIPHERALS AND GASH GAMES

There's little worse than coughing up a wad of dough on a game or peripheral, rushing back with it from the shop and then finding it is an absolute crock of poop. But even then, during your darkest hour of rage and disappointment, it can be hard to bring yourself to actually destroy something you've just spent your hard-earned cash on, no matter how much it might deserve it.

That's where we fit in. Send us your worst-ever buy, we'll beat the crap out of it and then replace it with something better. All you need to do is explain in 50 words why it must die.

Send your hated gaming objects (games or hardware) to the usual address, marked: Smash It Up. Sorry, but we can't return any entries. Only the best entry each month will get a replacement prize. Please state what game formats you own.

BUG STOMPER

TELL US ABOUT THOSE GAMING GLITCHES

We've all seen them. Sometimes they are just amusing little glitches. Sometimes they are horrific balls-ups that ruin whole games. Bugs – no matter how hard they try, they can never quite get rid of them.

So to make sure fellow players know where to expect a code cockroach, let us know when you find one. We'll print the worst offenders and crush them with a big CVG hobnailed boot. Send any crime candidates you come across to mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk and we'll do the rest.

OPERATION FLASHPOINT

Format: PC

On single-player mission 9, your AI team-mates do nothing. At first we thought Codemasters was making a comment about the intelligence of your average GI, but later we found out this is a bug to be fixed in a future patch.

CRAZY TAXI 2

Format: DC

When you cross the bridge with the walkway above and try to leap a car while underneath the platform, you get stuck inbetween the platform and mid-air in a horrible case of jarring. It really slows down your time.

WINGMAN GETS HAMMERED

This month's stink offending the nostrils of gamers is... WingMan Force Feedback Mouse

YOU SAY:

"Please take my mouse and hurt it bad. I bought the evil thing thinking it was a cordless mouse and almost vomited with shock when I opened the box. The mouse is fixed to the base – it's as free to move as Hannibal Lecter when he's strapped up in that trolley."
Wayne Goodman, Bath

CVG SAYS:

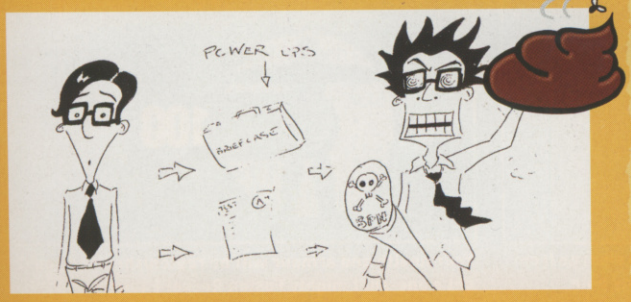
This thing was tough as old boots to smash up. It took three of us with industry-approved hammers to break it – and still the mouse didn't come off the base. We actually bent one of our hammers like a banana trying to dislodge it.

MELTING POT

SEND US YOUR GAME IDEAS

SWOT ATTACK!

You play Crispin, the swot who's out to rid the school of bullies to get five minutes behind the bike shed with Samantha Leggs. Crispin starts out with weak attacks, but by exploring the school you can collect test papers and red apple power-ups, turning Crispin into Avenger Boy. This gives him super-human strength and devastating attacks. **© Andrew Smith**



ACTION REPLAY

GROOVY GAMING GEAR OF YESTERYEAR

#2: BIGTRAK

Year released: 1980
Manufacturer: MB Electronics

WHAT IS IT?

Bigtrak was once every young kid's dream toy. Okay, it wasn't an Atari 2600 VCS or one of Clive Sinclair's new-fangled ZX80s, but it was cutting edge electronic entertainment of a different kind: the early eighties' Aibo.

What made Bigtrak so cool was that you pre-coded its instructions – forward 5, turn 20, pause 10, fire 6, etc – into the keypad on its back and then watched in awe as it would follow your preset path, carefully navigating all doors and corners around the house. As a final command you could make Bigtrak dump its load from the contents of its (optional but essential) trailer on to the floor.

TV ads at the time showed it effortlessly emptying apples but ours used to struggle with a tiny plum. Maybe they just had weak motors.

WHY YOU SHOULD WANT ONE

Robot toys are all the rage again and Bigtrak helped kick it all off. Owning one is like owning Super Mario Bros on Game 'n' Watch – retro cool.

LOOK OUT FOR...

The optional trailer that attached to the back of Bigtrak. Essential for impressing friends by delivering cold drinks and automatically ejecting it into their hands.

WHERE YOU CAN GET ONE?

www.ebay.co.uk is probably the only place to look. Over the last few weeks Bigtraks have gone in the region of £40-£70 – expect to pay slightly less for the trailer. Check that the Bigtrak has all its stickers, battery case cover and rubber wheel grips... oh, and that it works!

ALTERNATIVELY...

RAD RC Robot by Vivid Imaginations. A mean-looking mother that shoots Nerf darts from his stomach. Even though he's all-new, RAD's great advantage is you can actually get him to fetch you things while you slob out on the sofa watching TV. It's got to be worth £89.99 for that alone.

THE DOGHOUSE

BEWARE: CHEATS WITH TEETH!

Welcome to Hunter's domain. Each month, we let our rabid ankle-biter out to sniff out the very finest selection of cheats, tips and codes for you to chew over. You can make his life easier by sending in your own. Just make 'em good ones, 'cos Hunter goes for the nuts.

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX

Enter any of these button codes while the game is paused and L1 is held down on the controller. Repeat to disable them. Radical, gnarly, etc...

EXTRA COURSE TIME: Square, Up, Circle, X.
ALWAYS HAVE SPECIAL AVAILABLE: Left, Down, Triangle, Circle, Up, Left, Triangle, Square.
LARGE TYRES: Down, Circle, Circle, Down.

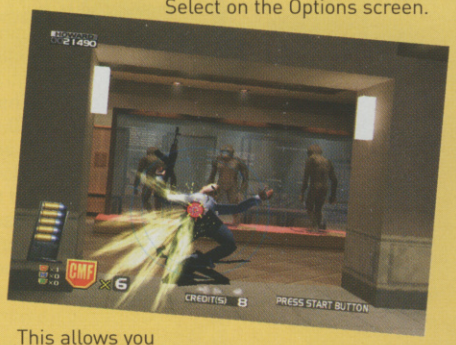
ROAD CHAMPS: BXS STUNT BIKING

Get yourself right on down to the Password screen sharpish and type in one of these codes to reap the rewards:

EFFECT	CODE
Unlock extra levels and the BMX Superbike	TC4D
Unlock training career and tournament modes	QGF7
Complete training level 1	TH0D
Complete training level 2	THBD
Complete training level 3	SH6K
Complete training level 4	SHJN
Complete training level 5	SHWQ

CONFIDENTIAL MISSION

Successfully complete the game, on any difficulty setting, to unlock Mission Select on the Options screen.



This allows you to jump to the start of any of the three missions. Also, complete all the training games in order to unlock the Another World option.

STAR WARS EPISODE I: THE BATTLE FOR NABOO

Go to Options/Passcodes and enter in any of the following codes. You will hear a click as confirmation.

CODE	ENABLES
LFZWKXAA	Infinite lives
JHGNRGAS	All levels
CXSJMIAA	One shot kills
NIZWAGAO	Unlock all Naboo ships
FMRYLDAD	Dark side level
FRBPTDAY	Sith Infiltrator
RQORACAQ	AAT
XFIIYBAY	Swamp speeder

EXTERMINATION

Complete the game and save when prompted. Now, if you start a new game using that save file, instead of starting with nothing you will come ready equipped with tons of health, ammo, and vaccines.

RED FACTION

SECRET AREA:
Red Faction on PS2 is jam-packed with explosives and cool weapons, none more so than the awesome Fusion Rocket launcher. Unfortunately you can't get your hands on it until late in the game.

Or at least that's what we're meant to think. That's right, you can try this baby out early on in a secret cave. After your first meeting with Capek, you have to chase him through some caves. Somewhere along the way is a very special secret...

When you reach this steaming cavern you're getting real close. Kill all the mutants then look around to find a small, lit tunnel and jump up and in

Equip some explosive weapons and make the hole big enough to squeeze through. Then head on in

Be prepared for more beasties. When you emerge from the tunnel, examine the right wall for a tiny hole

On the other side is a monolith straight out of the movie 2001. Leap over, and hit the action button next to it

Your health and armour will be replenished and you'll get a one-shot mighty Fusion Rocket Launcher

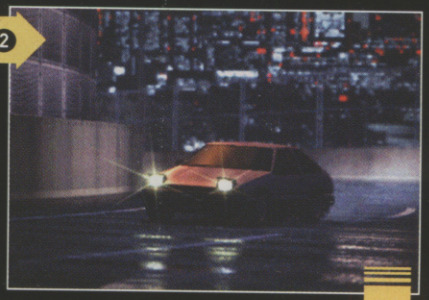
GRAN TURISMO 3

You've just got hold of GT3 and your Nintendo/Microsoft/Sega loving mates are coming round to have a look. You really wanna show 'em something impressive, right? You should check out the wet courses. Here's a quick step-by-step guide to unlocking and racing on them:

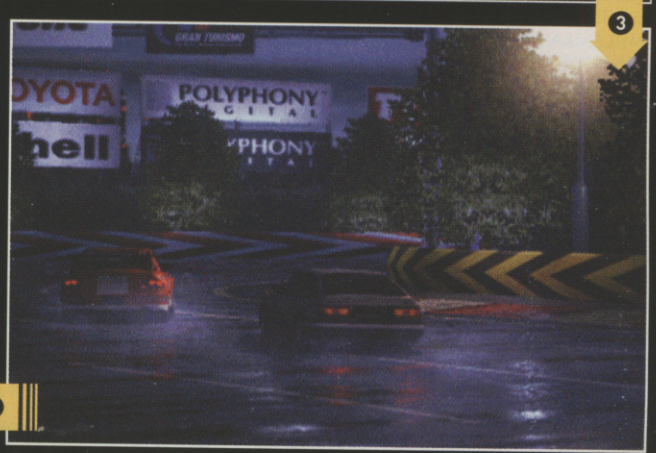
Win all the Sunday Cup races in Simulation mode with a Toyota Sprinter Trueno GT APEX.

Upgrade all the basics in each category and then earn the Rally Licence to unlock Super Special 5

Bob's your uncle and now you can race in the wet. But take care – it's a different ball game



When the rally car slows in the double corner, accelerate into it thus using it as a crash barrier. With a bit of luck you'll end up in front



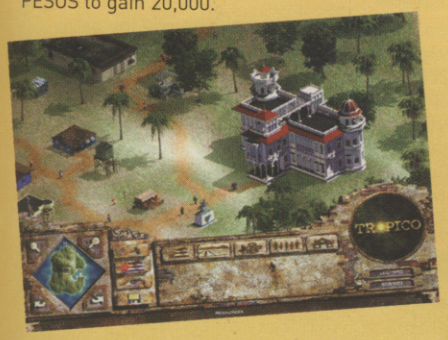
To win, simply keep up with the rally car. Stay in its wake until near the end of the second lap. As you near the penultimate corners, get ready to cheat

TROPICO

Bring happiness and riches into everyone's lives.

GET TEN ADDITIONAL HAPPINESS POINTS: While playing, hold Control and type CONTENDO.

INCREASE CASH: Hold Ctrl down and type in PESOS to gain 20,000.



OPERATION WINBACK

ALL CHARACTERS: Using the all characters cheat will let you play with cool cats like a Ninja. When the 'Press Start' screen appears, quickly tap in Up, Down, Down, Right, Right, Right, Left, Left, Left, Left and then hold Circle and press Start. This will unlock all characters for multiplayer games.

TRAIL MODE: When 'Press Start' flashes, quickly tap in Up, Down, Down, Right, Right, Right, Left, Left, Left, Left, hold Triangle and press Start. Enter this before the demo starts and you will get Trail mode.

SUDDEN DEATH MODE: Swiftly press L2, R2, L2, R2, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, hold L1 and press Start at the 'Press Start' screen before the demo starts. Sudden Death mode will enable one shot kills.

MAX POWER MODE: At the 'Press Start' screen, quickly press L1, R2, L2, R2, L2, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Circle hold L1 and press Start before the demo starts to get Max Power mode where you start the game with all weapons and infinite ammo.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2

Complete Tails level Route 101 and Rouge's level Route 280 in the main game to unlock a pretty cool kart racing mini-game.

MEGAMAN XTREME

HARD MODE: Complete the game to unlock Hard mode.

EXTREME MODE: Complete the game again, only this time do it on Hard mode. Extreme mode consists of eight bosses without the story part of the game.

REALLY STUCK

Absolutely stumped on a game? Ridiculed by your mates? There is hope: The Computer And Video Games Tips Helpline.

0906 466 4659

Open seven days a week, 8am-11pm. On the very rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team, who guarantee to find you an answer within 24 hours.

Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In case of problems, please call Customer Services on 0870 800 6155.

MEGAMAN X5

Here are a few handy tips to make life easier for the old-skool platform dude:

X BUSTER'S SUPER NOVA ARMOUR
At the Character Select screen, highlight X Buster and press Up [x2] and Down [x9]. You should hear a sound. Now press Circle.

X BUSTER'S FOURTH ARMOUR
Same as before, only this time tap out Up [x2], Down [x9], Up [x2], Down [x9]. Listen for the confirmation and get going.

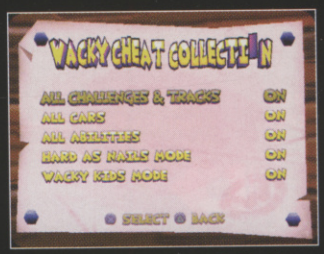
ZERO'S BLACK ARMOUR
Highlight Zero at the Character Select screen and press Down [x2], Up [x9]. Listen out for the confirmation noise then hit Circle.

ZERO'S GOLD ARMOUR
Again highlight Zero and press Up [x3], X [x2], Circle, Up, Down, Circle, Triangle, Up, Left, Triangle. After the noise just press Circle.

WACKY RACES

Enter the following codes on the Cheat Codes area from the menus, and then activate it on the Code Collection screen to gain the following good stuff:

WHAT YOU GET	PASSWORD
Unlock All Tracks & Challenges	CHIMPGIVEAWAY
Unlock All Vehicles	MONKEYSPOILERS
Unlock Every Gadget	GADGETCLEAROUT
Wacky Races Kids (Super Deformed)	THOSEWACKYKIDS
Unlock Dastardly Difficulty	FASTCARSAGOGO



Turn on cheats in Cheat Collection

Each car has unique power-ups

READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING: ROUND 2

MICHAEL JACKSON: Highlight the Arcade option at the main menu and tap in Left, Left, Right, Right, Left, Right then L+R.
RUMBLEMAN: Highlight Championship from the main menu and input Left, Left, Right, Left, Right, Right, Left, Right, Left, followed by L+R.
SHAQ: Highlight Survival from the main menu and press Left, Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, Left, Left, Right and L+R.

CLIVE BARKER'S UNDYING

Press the Tab key for the chat window and then enter one of the following codes for a nifty cheat.

CODE	EFFECT
eh	God mode
satan	unlimited health
addall	all weapons and spells
becomelight	toggle extra light
invisible	enemies ignore you

GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

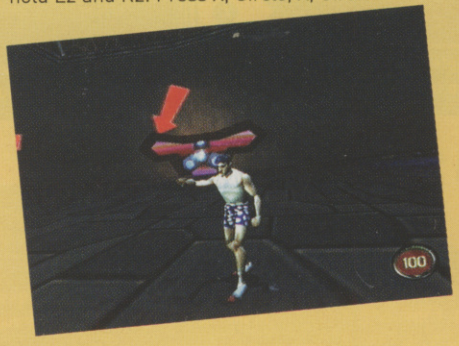
Enter one of the following passwords to get to the desired level:

QUEST 1:
LEVEL 2: L Heart K Heart Heart Heart B L
LEVEL 3: Q Zero M Heart Heart Heart 1 H
LEVEL 4: P S 5 Heart 7 Heart B 4
LEVEL 5: T J R Heart 7 Heart 2 Heart
LEVEL 6: J J T Heart 7 Heart 7 L
FINAL BOSS: K D C Heart H Heart S H

QUEST 2:
LEVEL 1: G N Heart Heart K 0 0 H
LEVEL 2: G N 1 Heart 5 0 8 J
LEVEL 3: X 4 3 Heart 5 0 M R
LEVEL 4: L S 5 Heart 9 1 1 4
LEVEL 5: D N 7 Heart 9 3 Heart 7
LEVEL 6: X N 9 Heart 9 3 3 3
FINAL BOSS: N 8 C Heart K 4 0 N

MDK2 ARMAGEDDON

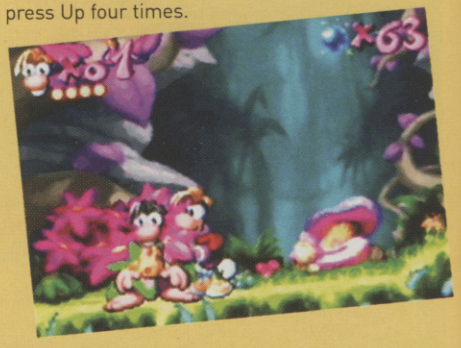
KURT IN BOXER SHORTS: On the main menu, hold L2 and R2, press Square twice, then Triangle and Square again.
SLOW MOTION: Play as Max, then hold R2 and press Up four times.
RUDE NOISES: Play as Doctor Hawkins, then press L2, R2, Left and X.
PANNING CAMERA VIEWS: Pause the game and hold L2 and R2. Press Circle, X, Circle, X.
WEIRD CAMERA VIEWS: Pause the game and hold L2 and R2. Press X, Circle, X, Circle.



RAYMAN ADVANCE

Having trouble with everyone's favourite Frenchman? Try this for size, then: When you run out of lives press Up, Down, Right, Left at the Continue screen. Then press Start. You will notice that you have not lost any continues. How sweet is that?

SLOW MOTION: Play as Max, then hold R2 and press Up four times.



INDIANA JONES AND THE INFERNAL MACHINE

Get that little bit extra out of this N64 platform classic with these oddities:

PASSWORD	ENABLES
CHEESE	View development team
REALHARD	Expert mode
ANCIENT	Art
MUCKE	Sound Test
ABSPANN	Credits

ARMY MEN SARGE'S HEROES 2

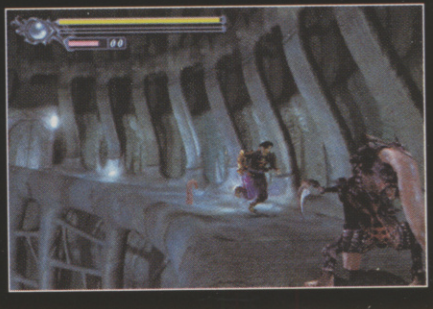
Input these as passwords to make the game a total breeze.

CODE	GIVES YOU
FREEPLAY	Level Select
NODIE	Invincibility
NOSEEUM	Invisible
GIMME	All Weapons
IMHUGE	Big Mode
SHORTY	Small Mode

ONIMUSHA

MINI-GAME: Complete the game with all 20 Flourites, then save. This will unlock the Onimusha Spirits Speed Trial mini-game. Complete this to play the regular game with unlimited ammunition, 99 Soul Absorbers, a Bishamon Sword, and regenerating magic.

EASY MODE: Start a game and allow yourself to die between ten and 20 times. Eventually a message will appear informing you that an easy mode is now available. Of course this cheat is for wimps, but then we can't all be ace gaming geniuses, can we?



YOUR BEST TIPS

Every month the best reader tip will be printed and will score a prize of one of the latest games. Send your tips to: barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk or

THE DOGHOUSE,
COMPUTER & VIDEO GAMES,
DENNIS PUBLISHING,
30 CLEVELAND STREET,
LONDON W1P 5FF.

ARE YOU THE DON OF GAMES? THEN TAKE THE CVG CHALLENGE

Every month we'll be setting you gaming challenges across a range of formats. Competition will be tough and we'll be printing a table of the top five entries for each challenge. The top scorer on each challenge will get the coolest prize we can wangle.

NEW CHALLENGES THIS MONTH: Each month we set you three new challenges, give you last month's results and update existing leagues.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2
We want fast times on the Metal Harbour stage. For starters, try beating Barny's time of 2.04. Do that and you're in with a chance.

GRAN TURISMO 3
Use any car to get the best time on the second race in the Sunday cup. Can you crack Steve F's time of 3.10?

WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH
Fastest complete time on King's Ransom level on Agent setting. Only those who can beat Les's time of 2.15 need apply.

LAST MONTH'S RESULTS: This month's three winners will each receive three months' worth of CVGs. Hurrah!

CONFIDENTIAL MISSION

1	1023855	Dan Harris
2	1019005	James Sandy
3	1016550	Sam Bolton
4	1016450	Den Jensen
5	1013765	Steve Pryce

CRAZY TAXI

1	351.68m	Sian Clery
2	349.22m	Derek Smiles
3	347.56m	Ben Lee
4	345.78m	Kevin Jackson
5	345.35m	Sam Tibble

ISS PRO EVOLUTION 2

1	23	Sean O'Leary
2	22	Ben Lee
3	18	JG Henderson
3	18	Sam Zukoski
5	18	Jody White

HOW TO ENTER:
Take a photo or screenshot of the screen showing your score. Write your name, address and score on a piece of paper. Send your entry with a recent pic of yourself to the usual address, marked: CVG Challenge, or scan your pics and email: barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk

CHALLENGE CVG
BEAT US AND BOAST

Each month you get the chance to put your gaming skills to the test... against us! Pick a challenge and follow the simple instructions.

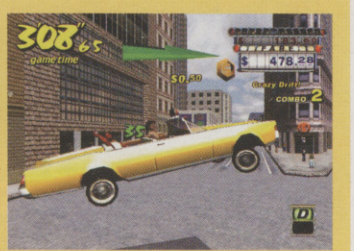
CHALLENGE 1

Game: Unreal Tournament
Formats: PC/Mac
Rules: Deathmatch. The most frags in a single game wins. Simple.
To take part: Log on to our server called CVG House of Pain [IP: 192.168.0.1 or 62.49.226.118] between 4pm and 8pm on Monday August 27th. Just don't log off until we have your contact details.

CHALLENGE 2

Games: Red Faction/ Crazy Taxi 2/ Konami/ Krazy Racers
Formats: PS2/ DC/ GBA
Rules: We'll agree them on the day
To take part: Send your name and contact details to the usual address marking the envelope Challenge CVG or e-mail barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk
Write in no more than 20 words why you reckon you can have us. We pick the two best and you come to our offices to duke it out. Come on wimps.

If you think you're hard enough, then take us on at Unreal on the 27th



Dare you take on the mighty CVG at Crazy Taxi? Only the brave need apply

CHEATS UNLIMITED
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TOP WALKTHROUGHS PLUS OVER 10,000 CHEATS & TIPS

Abe's Odysee	Dragonball Z F. Bout	Monster Rancher	Star Trek: Invasion
Age of Empires	Driver 1 & 2	Onimusha: Warlords	Star Wars Phant Men.
Alex F's P. Man. 2001	Duke Nukem Series	Perfect Dark	Star Wars: Jedi P Bats
Alien Resurrection	Dune	Phantasy Star Online	Star Wars: R. Squad
Alone in Dark 2 & 4	Escape Monkey Island	Player Man. '00 & '01	Stupid Invaders
Alundra 1 & 2	Evil Dead: Hail King	Pokemon (All Colour)	Summoner
Army Men Series	Extermination	Pokemon Stadium	Super Mario Advance
Banjo Kazooie	F.A P L F'ball Man '01	Pokemon Trad. Card	Syphon Filter 1 & 2
Banjo Tooie	F355 Challenge	Premier Man. 99&00	The Sims
Blade	FA P L F'ball Man '00	Quake 2	The World is Not En.
Bouncer	Fear Effect 1 & 2	Rainbow Six	Theme Park
Broken Sword 1 & 2	FIFA 2001	Rayman 1, 2 & Adv	Time Splitters
C-12 Final Resistance	Final Fantasy 7, 8 & 9	Red Faction	TOCA WTC
Castlevania	Gold Pokemon	Resident Evil Series	Tomb Raider 1 - 5
Champ. Man. 2000	Golden Eye	Rogue Spear	Tomorrow Never Dies
Chase the Express	Gran Turismo 1 & 2	Roller Coaster Tycoon	Tony Hawk's 1 & 2
Civilisation 2	GTA 1 & 2	Rumble Racing	Toy Story 2
Code Veronica (R.Evil)	GT Advance Champ.	Shadowman	Vagrant Story
Colin McRae Rally 2	Half Life	Shenmue	Vanishing Point
Comm & Conq Series	Harvest Moon	Silent Hill	Virtua Tennis
Crash Band. Series	Hidden & Dangerous	Simpson Wrestling	Wario Land 3
Crazy Taxi 1 & 2	Hogs of War	Simpsons Treehouse	WCW Backstage Asst
D. M. Freestyle BMX	ISS Pro Evolution 2	Sims	World Chmp Snooker
Diddy Kong Racing	LMA Manager 2001	Skies of Arcadia	World's S. P. Chases
Digimon World	M Hoffman's Pro BMX	Sky Odyssey	WWF No Mercy
Dino Crisis 1 & 2	Medal of Honor 1 & 2	Smackdown 2	WWF Smackdown1&2
Discworld 2 & Noir	MediEvil 2	Sonic Adventure 1&2	Xena Warrior Princess
Donkey Kong 64	Metal Gear Solid	Soul Reaver	X-Files
Dracula Resurrection	Metro. Street Racer	Spyro 1, 2 & 3	Zelda
Dragon Warrior Mons	Mission Impossible	SSX - Snowboarding	Zelda: Links Awake.

THE ABOVE LIST IS JUST A SELECTION OF WHAT'S AVAILABLE

Dreamcast PlayStation NINTENDO64 PC GAME BOY COLOR PlayStation2

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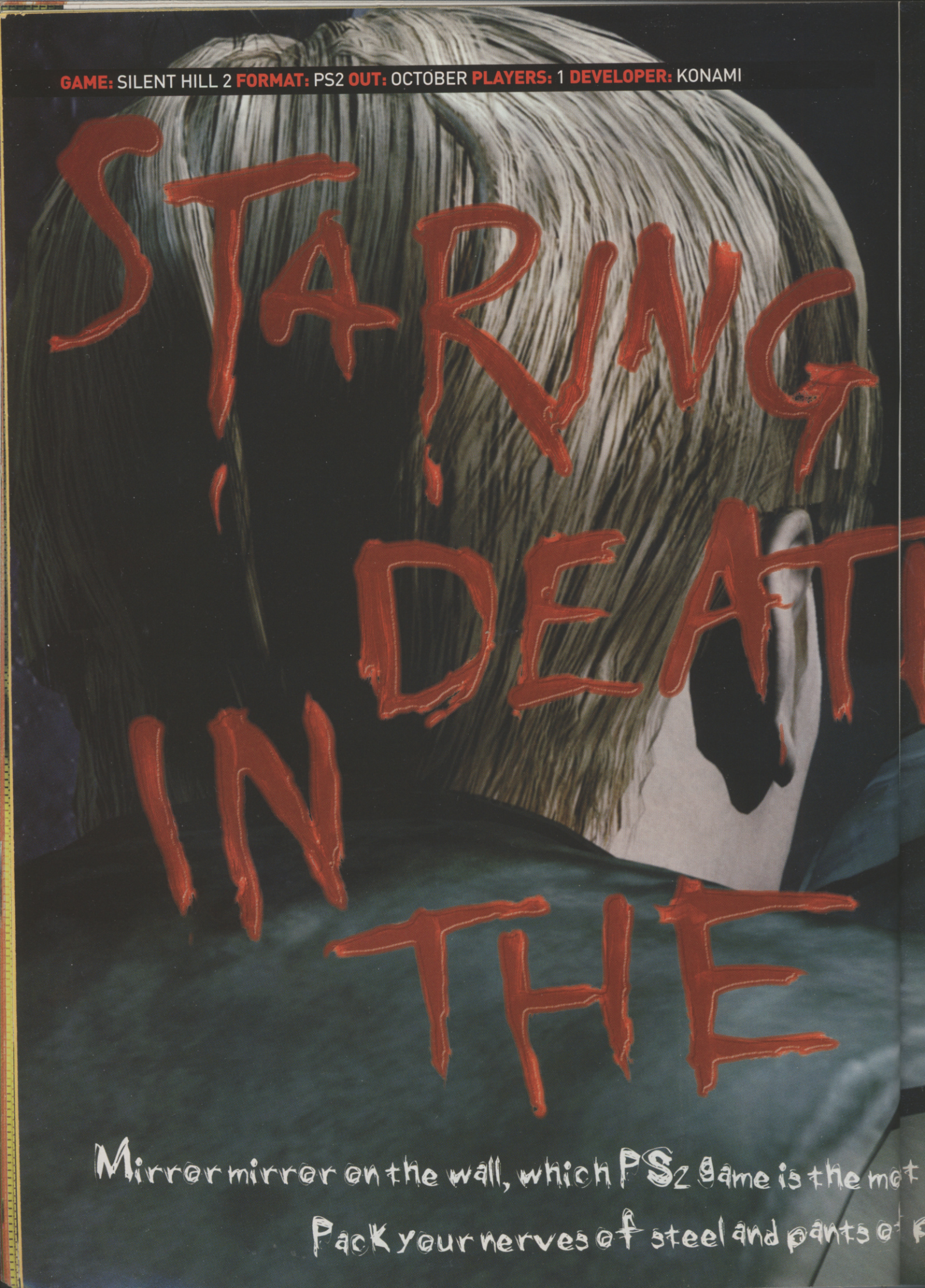
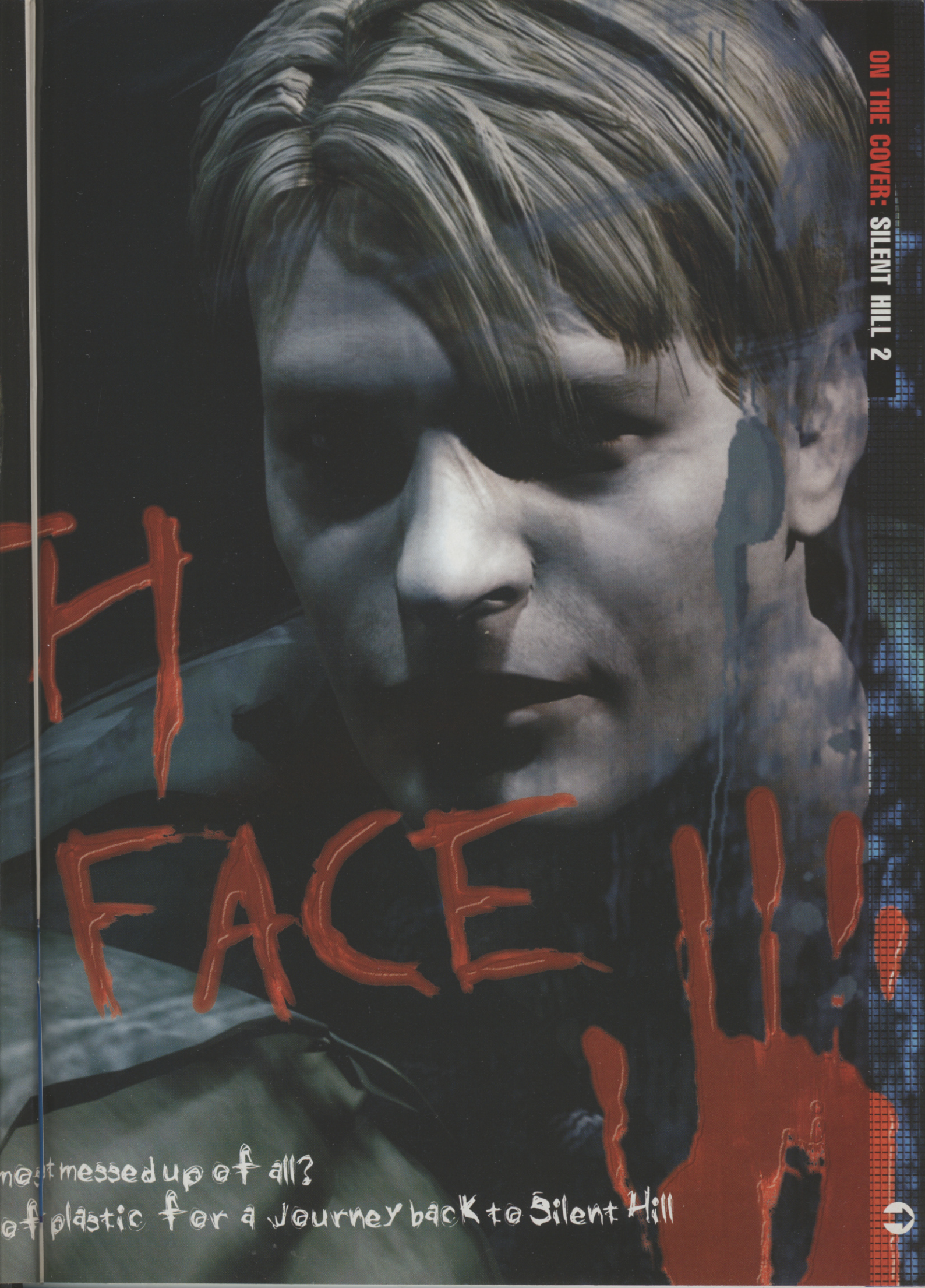

GAME: SILENT HILL 2 FORMAT: PS2 OUT: OCTOBER PLAYERS: 1 DEVELOPER: KONAMI
STARING
DEATH
IN THE
Mirror mirror on the wall, which PS2 game is the mo
Pack your nerves of steel and pants o


ON THE COVER: SILENT HILL 2
TH
FACE!!!
messed up of all?
plastic for a journey back to Silent Hill

It's a morning like any other. Almost. Sunlight glimpses through the curtains, next door's dog barks at the guy sticking pizza menus through your door and your hair is so messy it looks like you've been held up by the feet and used to sweep the floor. The state of your barnet is a shock, but not quite as big as the one you get when you open the letter from your wife, asking to meet in your favourite vacation spot. Normally that wouldn't be so bizarre, but she's been dead for three years. Shit.

And that's just the start of it. When you turn up for the rendezvous, rather than finding the rotting corpse of your dead missus you're attacked by Silent Hill's once-friendly townsfolk, now turned grizzly mutant freaks who don't welcome visitors with a warm handshake.

The idyllic haven where you first met your wife is now a grey hellhole, filled with demon spawn desperate for human blood. And those goddamn nurses from the first game are still around, but so is the axe. Make like a lumberjack and hack away!

Akihiro Imamura: "In SH2 I wanted insanity and love". Two of our favourite things

The first game has some of the best FMVs around, and the new ones look even better

PREPARE TO BE SHOCKED

It's Silent Hill 2's gut-churning gore that will appeal to most of the sadists out there, and not even the most gib-hungry player will be disappointed by the offal this beast serves up. People melt before your eyes and then attack your ankles, skinned dogs and winged demons chew on your head. Thankfully you're handy with a pistol and there's nothing more satisfying than bagging a demon, then crushing its still-quivering corpse under your boot.

Gore aside, the best thing about Silent Hill 2 is the action remains genuinely shocking from start to finish. There's no Res Evil cheese, just sheer terror as your senses are bombarded with gruesome images, haunting sound and gameplay that's so tense you'll leave nail marks in the pad where you've gripped it too tightly.

THE EXPERTS SPEAK

The developers behind Silent Hill 2 have been sharpening their blood-drizzled fingernails and honing their twisted

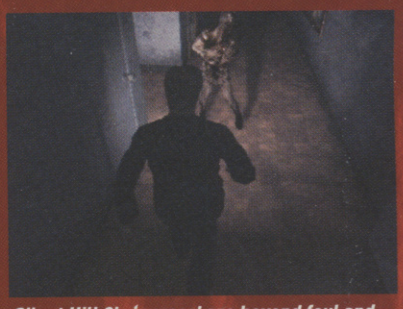
Here's Angela writhing around in some goop. No doubt you'll have to save her from the madness, as well as yourself

Sweet Jesus! What a sight! Believe us, you'll see things in SH2 that will haunt your dreams

The first game's nurses were grim but at least they looked like nurses

DIPPED IN GOO

It's not just the town that has been made more spooky and grim – the creatures you fight are much more gross than before too. The melty-nurses we came across each had a slimy look, like they've been dipped in a mixture of snot and blood. Nice. Shoot one and it falls to the ground. A few seconds later, it starts thrashing around before trying to bite your ankles.



Silent Hill 2's 'nurses' are beyond foul and lack any sort of human features

Torch-lit terrors on PSone as Harry explores the town looking for his missing daughter

A GOOD LICK OF PAINT

The action may take place in the same twisted and ghoul-ridden town as the first game on PSone, but only the street names will be familiar to veterans. The town has had a complete visual overhaul since the first game and and is far eerier than before. You'd swear you could run your finger down the screen and it would come away grimy.

The level of detail and the light effects are astounding. Feel the fear

You'll want to put toilet paper round the seat before you sit down to drop the kids off at the pool here. At least you won't have to worry about the smell you make

programming skills and have created a sequel even more involving and unsettling. Speaking to CVG, Japanese producer Akihiro Imamura says of the spook-factor: "You will feel as if you're in a scene... you know something is there but don't know what it is and you get scared. You tend to feel the fear..."

What this means is Silent Hill 2 isn't simply going to be just another survival horror game. Nope, this mind-melter is packed to bursting point with shockingly adult themes and psychologically-disturbing tricks guaranteed to have players almost too afraid and too freaked out to carry on adventuring.

All of the characters in SH2 are incredibly detailed

WE'RE DEAD EXCITED

Remember the twisted camera angles from the first game? They've been overhauled for the sequel, so when James walks through the hospital the screen twitches, twists and bucks to keep you on the edge of your seat. It feels like you're plunged into the middle of a horror movie, cast as the unsuspecting victim.

There's also a new pseudo-3D sound system so even if you're playing through a standard TV you get the feeling something's crawling along behind you. Other clever tricks include a joypad that throbs and pulsates in time with James's heartbeat in critical situations, as well as

The town's sewers probably aren't the safest places to be and yet James scurries inside. Silly boy

sub-audible bass noises that rumble along in the background. You won't consciously notice these subtleties, but your brain picks them up, adding to the intense fear.

SWEET DARK CHOCOLATE

Fans of the first game will still be haunted by the way you had to switch between the relatively unsettling real world and the proper nightmare-inducing horror of the dark world. It's against your better judgement but you've got to step into this alternate reality once more, to unlock the mysteries around Silent Hill. At key points the real world will warp around you, plunging you into darkness and chaos. All

The visuals have a hand-painted look with a grainy effect over the top. The most impressive thing we've seen in ages

Check the expression of sheer horror on James's face as this shambling horror approaches

More mysterious little girls in SH2. The first game saw Cheryl disappearing... could she make a return on PS2?

the town buildings will still be where they're meant to be, only now they're crawling with unimaginable horrors and filled with twisted puzzles to match the disturbing nature of the dark plane.

It's the differences between the light and dark worlds that make Silent Hill 2 such a unique experience. Okay, switching between planes may not be new – both Soul Reaver and ShadowMan do it too – but Silent Hill does the transition from light to dark brilliantly, conveying a massively overpowering sense of dread and apprehension.

Remember when you tried to see if the school gerbil could swim by flushing it down the toilet and you got hauled in front of the headmaster? Well imagine that squelchy-belly feeling you had waiting to go into his office to receive a verbal beating, then multiply that by about 10,000 and you're somewhere near the feeling you get from exploring the dark world of Silent Hill 2.

CVG RECKONS

Silent Hill 2 offers a demented plot, well-structured puzzles and that untouchable eerie atmosphere all tied up in one of the tastiest, most stylish game worlds yet seen. Monsters or not, you're going to want to return to the town of Silent Hill time and again. Lee

CHAMBER OF HORRORS

Strong stories need even stronger characters and the principal players in Silent Hill 2 are a perfectly formed bunch. True to form, there are no clearly defined good or bad guys in the Silent Hill world. Like the eerie fog swirling about the streets, there are only ever grey areas and characters with murky pasts here. One thing is for sure, you never know quite who to trust in this messed-up town, and half the time you won't even know who's sane and who's completely barking. You may even start to wonder who's alive and who's dead...

MARY

Mary, James's wife, was beautiful and spiritual, and her death has hit the poor lad hard. Even though she died from a mysterious illness three years ago, she appears to have sent him a letter from beyond the grave. Could she still be alive somewhere out there in a dark recess of that town called Silent Hill? Or is it all some screwed-up trick of his twisted psyche?

MARIA

Maria meets James while he's making his way to Silent Hill to search for the meaning of the letter from his wife. She's a dead ringer for Mary, despite her different taste in clothes, and Maria and James both feel a mutual connection they can't quite figure out. What would you do? Cop off with Maria and forget about your deceased partner or keep going in search of the truth?

EDDIE

Eddie is a fat college kid who is choking on his own vomit the first time you meet him. Sounds like every student we've ever met, then. Give him the Heimlich manoeuvre and he may help you in your quest, but, like young Laura and practically everyone else with a Silent Hill postcode, there's something a bit hatstand about him. Maybe he just ate one pie too many.

JAMES SUNDERLAND

Sean Bean-alike James has been living a joyless life since the death of his wife, Mary, three years ago. He is drawn back to the place where he and his late bride shared so many good times by a mysterious letter... apparently from Mary herself. Quite how you'd tempt anyone back to a town where flapping hell-bats circle above and inside-out dogs roam the streets is anyone's guess.

LAURA

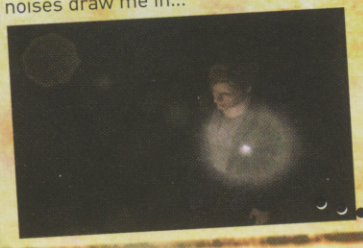
Laura is a cute little girl James meets early on but something's not quite right about her. She has an eerie air of maturity about her that makes James feel uneasy. They say girls grow up faster than boys but this is pushing it a little too far. Can she be trusted, or is she somehow connected to the darker side of the town? Let's face it, little kids don't have a great track record in horror films.

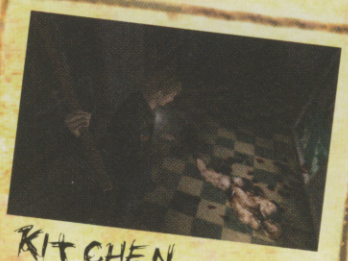
JAMES'S JOURNAL

Finally, I return to this godforsaken town. Delusions, nightmares brought on my daughter's death, I've heard a thousand explanations for what I saw, though to me it was real. But she is calling me. Mary, my only love. I would go anywhere for her. My first day back has passed and the nightmare begins again. All I can do is record what I see and if this horror swallows me whole, at least someone may get to the black heart of the evil and return this place to the light.

BROOKHAVEN HOSPITAL

God save anyone who gets sick around here. The once pristine hospital is now a festering pit of filth drowned in pitch blackness. Faint noises draw me in...



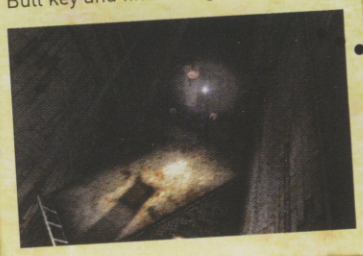


KITCHEN

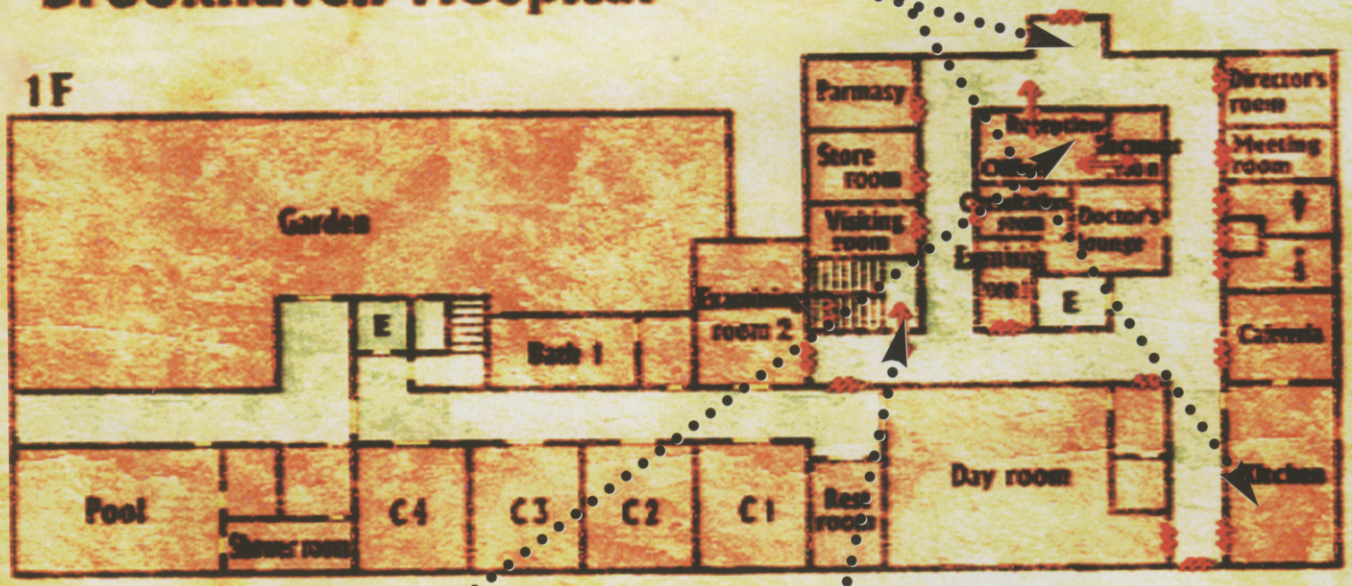
Jesus! What is this thing? As I search for a light switch, this thing jumps out. The best I can do is pummel it with a nearby chair leg.

ROOM 14

I find a box sealed with a combination lock and padlock. Whoever left the combination in the padded cell, I owe you my life. I open the box with the Bull key and find a single human hair.

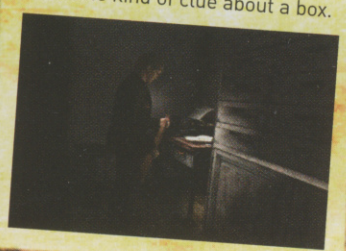


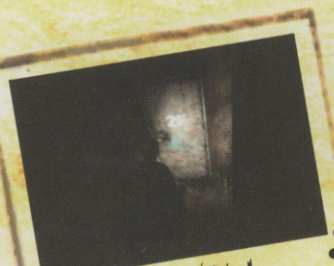
Brookhaven Hospital



RECEPTION

My hopes of finding any life at the reception desk are dashed when I find it desolate, but I discover a key and some kind of clue about a box.



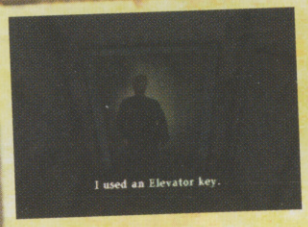


STAIRWELL

The power's down, the doors are locked and there's this stink of evil in the air. I need to get out of here fast. There must be some stairs up to the next floor.

THE SHOWERS

There's something stuck in the drain hole. I tie the hair that I found to the bent needle and hook the object out like a fish. Success! And thank God – it's an elevator key.

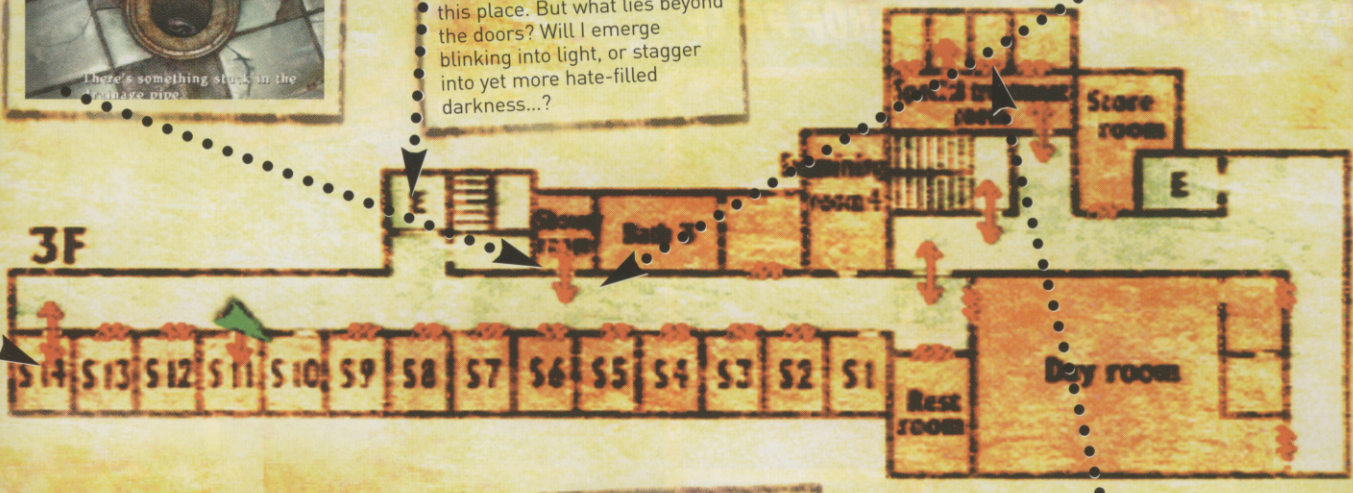


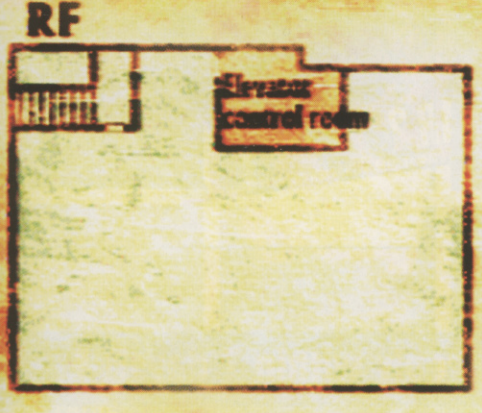
ELEVATOR

Finally I can get the hell out of this place. But what lies beyond the doors? Will I emerge blinking into light, or stagger into yet more hate-filled darkness...?

CORRIDOR

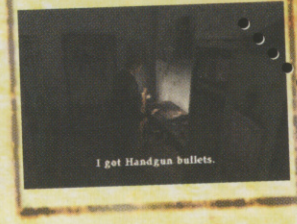
There's only one room left open to me now – and only one hope for escape from this twisted hospital of horrors. Heart racing, I make my way to the shower room.





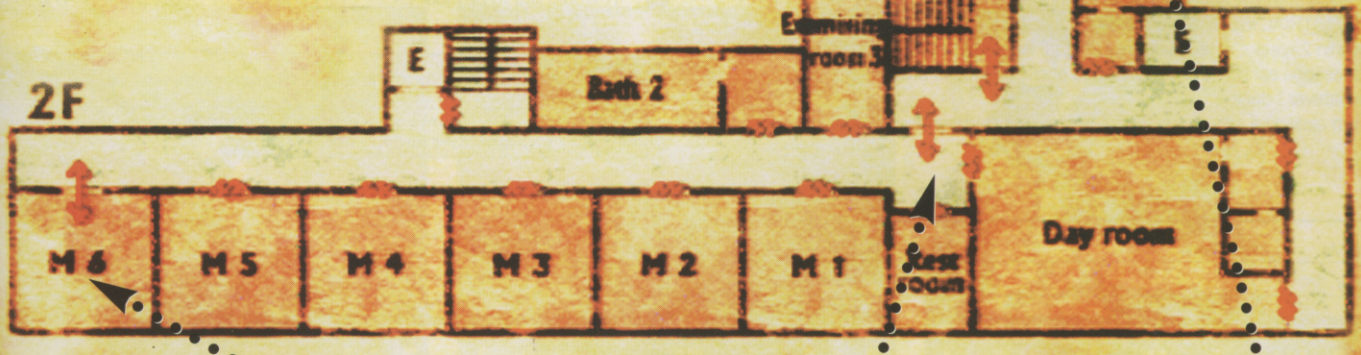
STORAGE

I find some bullets. I don't know what that thing was in the kitchen but I doubt it's alone. I'll keep my gun handy from now on.



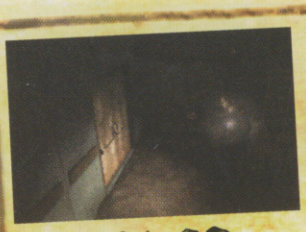
PADDED CELL

The stench of blood is overwhelming. Something is written in blood on the wall, and I find some kind of numeric password. What madness is this?



WARDS

Two of the skinned, oozing nurse creatures jump me from the darkness, spitting and spraying me with foul liquid. Blinded, I rattle off all of my bullets.



CORRIDOR

The silence is obliterated by the sound of a woman sobbing and my heart rises to my throat. Was that real or just in my head?

LOCKERROOMS

A watchful silence fills the hallways. I pick up a bent needle, not sure if I'll need it.

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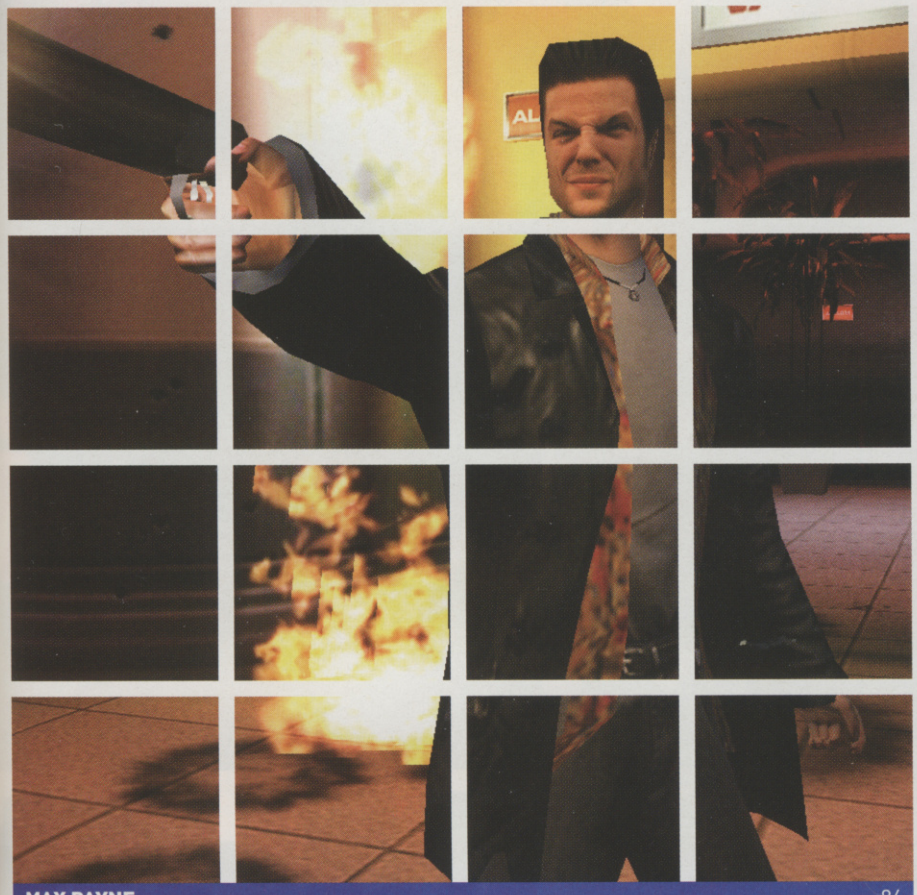
WHAT THE SCORES MEAN

1 – Argh, it stinks!
2 – Abysmal
3 – Sucks a fat one
4 – Oh pur-lease
5 – Very average
6 – Hmm, not bad
7 – Pretty tasty
8 – Very good
9 – Essential
10 – An unmissable belter that defines the genre

Reviews

Sorting the sweet wheat from the naff chaff



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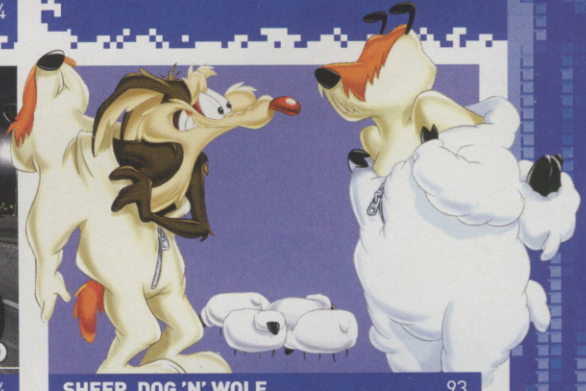

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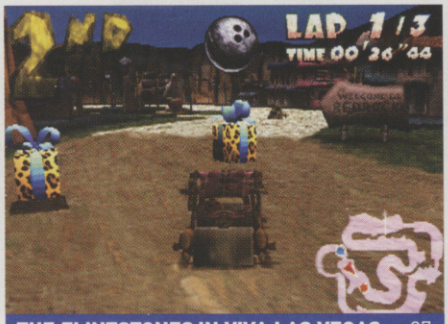


THE FLINTSTONES IN VIVA LAS VEGAS 97

DRAGON RIDERS 98

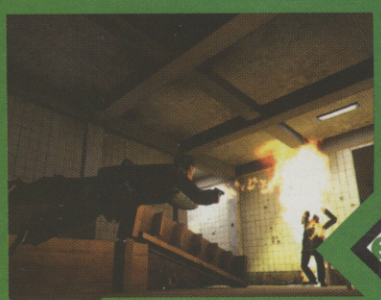
It's not only Max who can pull off the decent stuff, but often Max is the only survivor like when this bad guy tries to escape an exploding grenade

1

ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

He walks, he runs, jumps and crouches, just like any game hero, but Max can do so much more. If you've ever fancied diving through doorways shooting off lead as you go, then Max Payne is your man. It may take a while to get the hang of all the moves, but the result is well worth it so stick with it. He might have a face like someone's just floated a pungent air biscuit, but Max Payne is the PC's most agile hero.

2 The civilians are all in hiding



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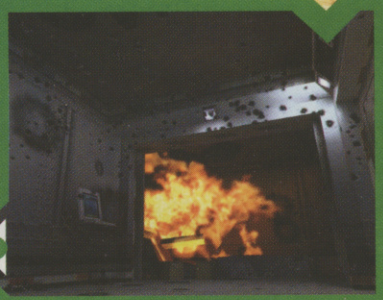
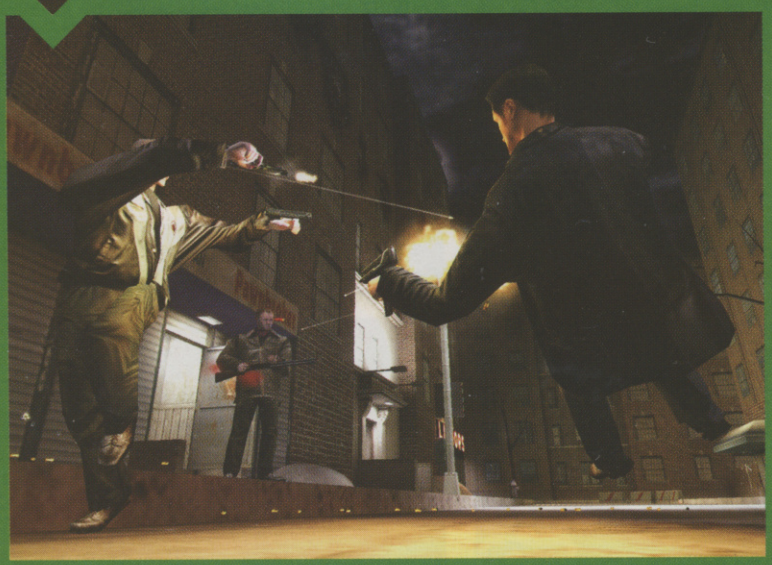


4 Put him out of his misery

Slow-mo the action during an explosion



Hit the Pause key during a gunfight and you can spin around and see the bullets hanging in mid air. Now just how cool is that?

The sawn-off shotgun is good for close encounters and

Max

A cop framed for a murde

COST: **£34.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **REMEDY**
PUBLISHER: **TAKE 2**

When it comes to hard-boiled gaming heroes, publisher Take 2 seems to own every single one of them on PC. Earlier this year we saw the release of the not-so-Serious Sam, and as winter takes hold we can expect Duke Nukem to blast his way back on to PC after a tortuous five-year absence. Thankfully, the final few months waiting for Duke's reappearance won't be quite so bad with Max Payne now out.

More serious than Sam and just as kick-ass as Duke, Max Payne is certainly the

CVG FACT

Set for release early next year is, of course, Max Payne for PlayStation 2. Also in production at Miramax is Max Payne The Movie.

one-on-ones, but it's not much cop when it comes to crowd control

It's slow to fire, but the Desert Eagle packs a mean punch

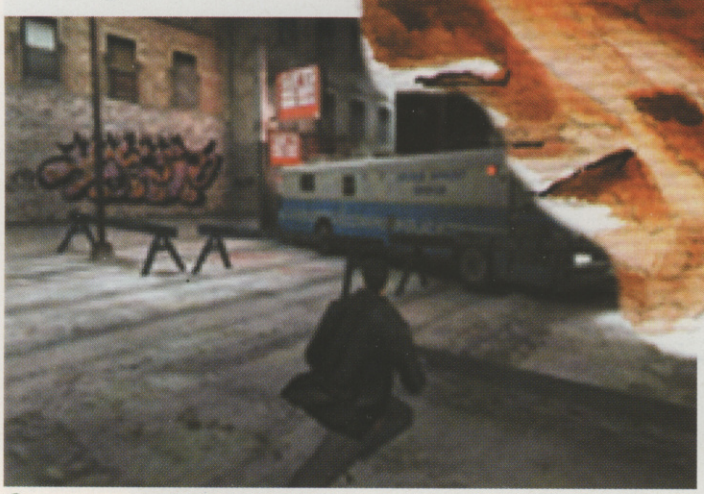
k Payne

der he didn't commit. Wait, it gets better

biggest name to hit the PC this year, though we're quite sure if the eponymous hero had a choice, he'd rather be living an altogether quieter life with his wife and daughter.

Max isn't a happy chap. As our leading man tells his story through impressive 3D cutscenes and comic book storyboards, we are taken back to when, as a New York cop, Max arrives at his New Jersey home to find it broken into. Worse still, graffiti and blood stain the walls; the graffiti bearing the mark of the latest designer drug 'V', and the blood of his baby girl and wife Michelle, both tortured and murdered in their beds.

Max is understandably pretty sore about the whole thing and has been for three long years (as you can probably tell from his expression). Now working undercover for the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Max has found his first lead in the case to find those responsible for the murders – which is just



There's a short tutorial to help you get the hang of things

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about where you come in and take control, hopefully to clear up the mess once and for all, or to be more accurate, create it.

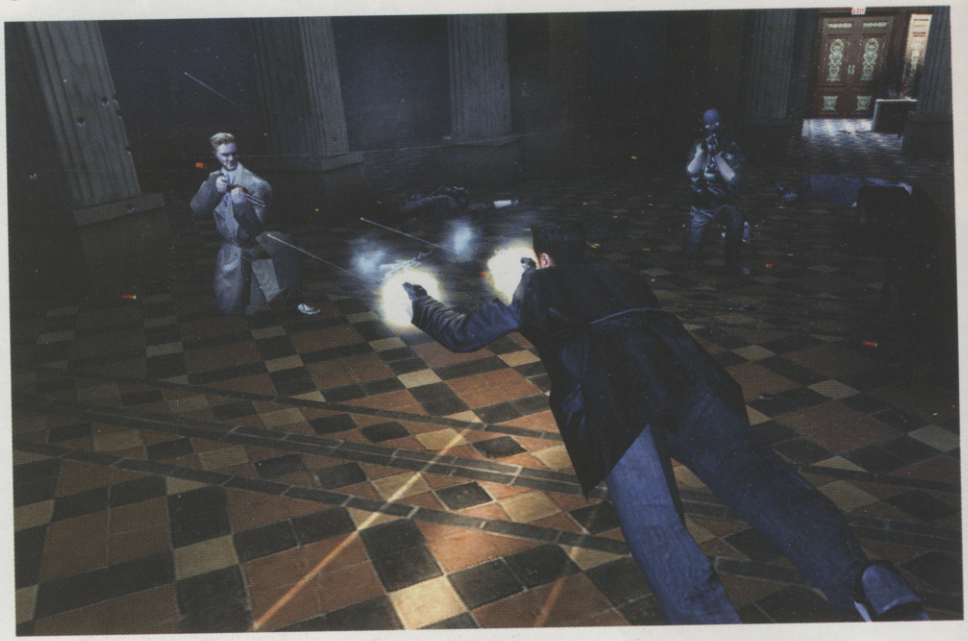
BLOOD AND GUTS

And messy Max Payne most certainly is. Not only do the bullets fly, they rip through wooden crates, shatter windows and create clouds of dust as they pepper the plaster and ricochet around the corridors and rooms. They tear through flesh, send gobs of blood against once-clean walls and send bodies across rooms thick with gunfire, leaving them limp and lifeless.

But Max Payne isn't what you'd call shockingly violent, certainly not in the same vein as Kingpin or Soldier Of Fortune. You won't see bodies explode, showering everything in hunks of polygon flesh. Nor will you see eyeballs fly across the screen or brains oozing from a split-open skull. Nope, all you see is bullets hit bodies and blood spit across the wall behind. Sounds pretty boring doesn't it, until you actually see the bodies and bullets move.

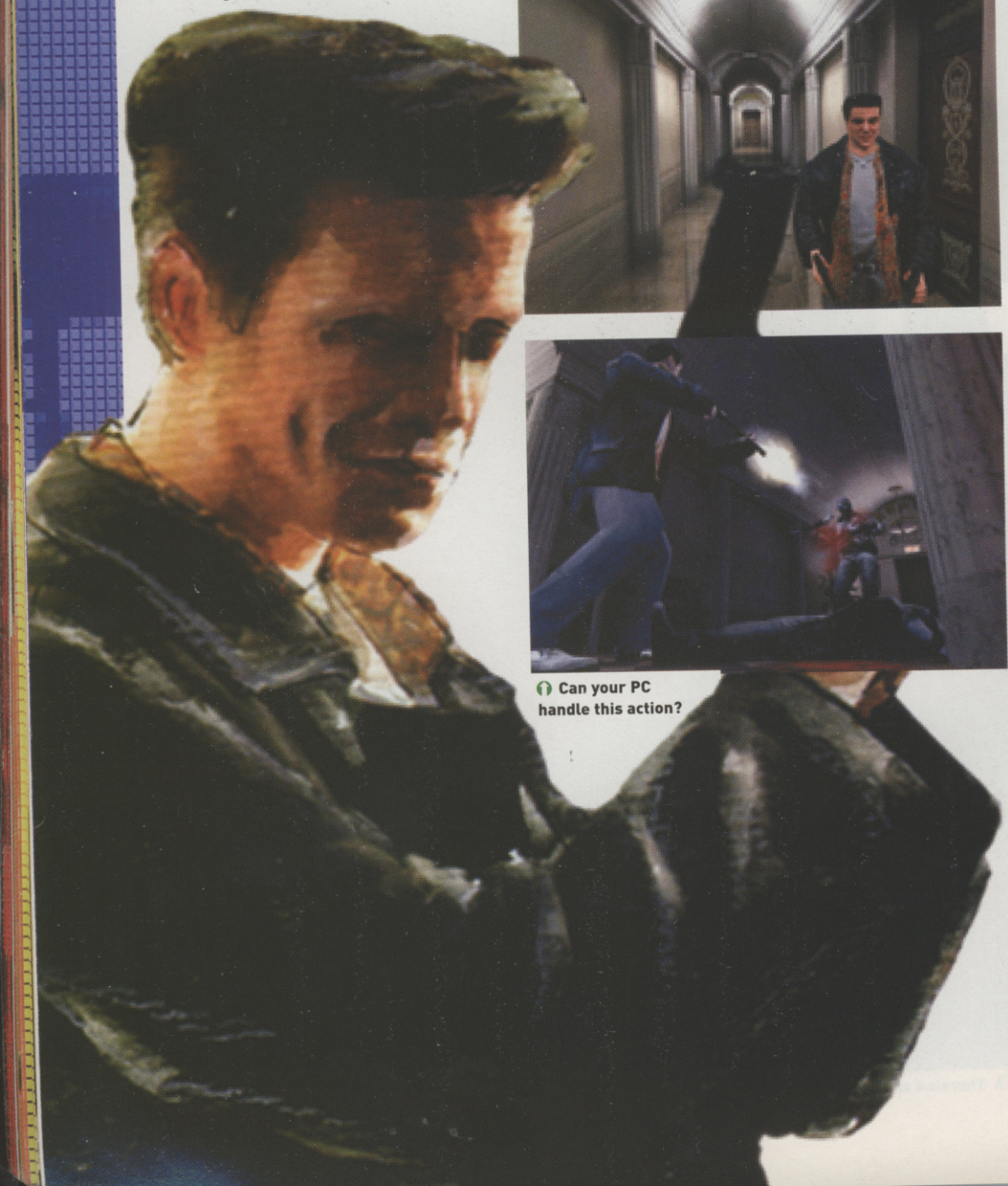
Rake one of your assailants with automatic gunfire and he'll visibly rattle as the bullets impact through his chest, then, with nothing to hold him up but the sudden silence, he'll slump to the ground like a sack of spuds. Similarly with your trusty Desert Eagle, plant a cap in the head of a bad guy and he'll fly across the room with the force of the world's most powerful handgun and, as he crashes to the ground, each limb will twitch as his virtual and short-lived life ebbs away. Max Payne isn't realistic, it's pure Hollywood. An over-the-top John Woo-inspired theatre of virtual violence where you play the lead role.

It's when you're surrounded in large open plan rooms like this that Max Payne is at its very best



Max has a face like a bulldog licking piss off stinging nettles

Can your PC handle this action?



KILLING TIME

Unlike almost all shoot 'em ups, Max Payne utilises a Tomb Raider-style view, but in terms if how the game plays it's closer to first-person games like Half-Life or Red Faction in that when you aren't blowing holes in the scenery – be it alive or not – you're usually looking for something or someone on which to vent your anger.

Puzzles are rare, and when they do present themselves they're simple find-the-button affairs. But by being able to see our hero, Finnish developer Remedy has allowed Max to throw some pretty nifty moves. As well as jumping and crouching, Max can, through deft use of movement and jump keys, dive left and right, roll backwards and dive headfirst towards the

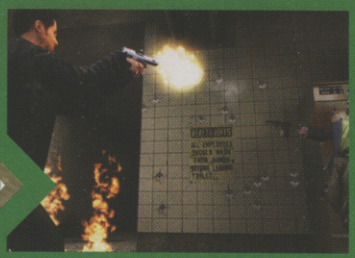
Near the end the mercenaries show up

Parp! Looks like Max just let rip again

JUST A MINUTE

Take down goons to earn more time in the unlockable New York minute mode. Looks lots of fun

Max Payne isn't the longest game ever made – we completed it in just over 12 hours. Complete it twice however and you open up New York minute mode, where you must complete each level in under a minute. Thankfully you get bonus seconds for each bad guy you pick off. We haven't got there yet, but we'll tell you how we get on.



Good gun action from Mr Payne

This looks like bad news for Max

Shoot the bloke, not the bits of paper

enemy, all with shotguns, pistols or even dual machine-guns blazing. Though nowhere near as deft as our Lara, there's one trick that Max has up his sleeve no other game can offer – slow motion.

And we're not talking a big 'R' spinning in the corner of the screen showing the last few seconds of blood-soaked action, but a complete change of pace in the game, albeit for a few seconds. Click your right mouse button and the game switches into a Matrix-style Bullet-Time mode. In it, everything – from the bullets, movement and even explosions – moves at a fraction of normal speed, except your view. So while Max dives across the room and bullets whizz past his ears, a good player should be able to kill everyone in the room by the time they have to dust off their trousers.

It'll take practice before you can polish off a roomful of bad guys before your Bullet Time runs out. More often than not you'll be diving ballet-like into empty rooms, only to bundle into a cupboard.

It may look a treat but you'd be better off shooting the bloke and not all those bits of filing paper

VIEW TO A KILL

Another way in which Max Payne cleverly borrows from cinema – especially Hong Kong cinema – is in the cutscenes that can spring up right in the middle of the action, especially at the beginning of the game.

That can't be good for your back...

Pump a guy full of shot and you may be treated to a repeat showing, close-up and in slow-mo, of course. Very neat, especially in showing off the incredible life-like animation, though it has to be said, not particularly precise. You may kill a guy who was kneeling behind a table, only to see him die a second time from the standing position. Duh. Still, the bullet view when you fire your sniper rifle more than makes up for the few inaccuracies – diving through enemy goons as if they weren't there being another example.

For the most part, however, Max Payne is a beautiful and exciting rollercoaster ride of a game. When you pull off a good looking and stylish kill you'll be patting yourself on the back for weeks. The sound too is fantastic. Clamp on a pair of headphones and you'll be hearing gunfire all around you. You may not always see where the bad guys are, but you'll certainly hear where the bullets are coming from.

But without a shadow of a doubt, the real star feature of the game is the character animation. Making up for the lack of real interaction in the story, the one or two crappy levels and predictable AI, the realistic way in which the characters move in a game has never looked so impressive.

In its own way, Max Payne is as important an action game as Half-Life was on PC all those years ago, certainly in terms of almost non-stop action.

If you've got the PC to handle it, Max Payne is an essential buy – one of the few games you can take to your console-owning chums and happily rub in their smug little faces.

CVG FACT

Max Payne has been granted a 15 certificate by the BBFC, but we're sure the censors weren't shown how to batter innocent junkies to death with a baseball bat. Buy it now before it gets banned.

CVG RECKONS

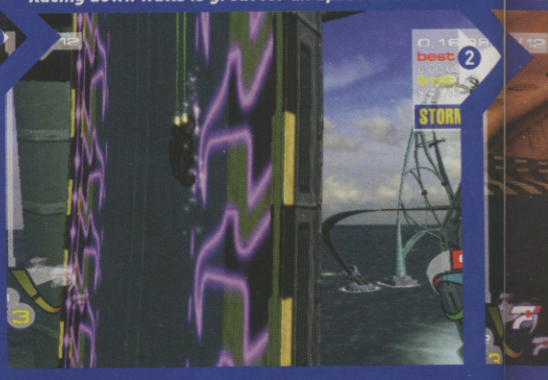
Short, but the story's strong and the smooth animation rocks. Violence has never looked so stylish. **Richie**

8

If you like this try this...
Hitman: Codename 47 (PC)

We're not in outer space here, the track just loops so much that you end up racing vertically into the sky. Don't forget to fasten that seat belt nice and tight now, kids

Racing down walls is great for an upset stomach



I THINK I'M GONNA BE SICK

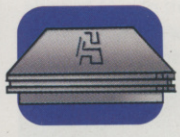
When you're racing at the speed of sound, the last thing you want is an upset stomach. And Extreme G-3 should come packed with some free aspirin, since it's rammed with gravity-defying vertical drops, helixes and loops that'll churn your guts up like a vat of cottage cheese . You don't only race up cliffs, but you do it upside-down, and with someone shooting rockets at your ass. We'll stick to walking, thanks.

No idea how bikesick to

Extreme G-3

Rollercoasters + violence + gravity defiance = vomit

Bike detail is awesome in these replay shots, but in-game all you see is the arse-end of them. Driving a rectangle with exhausts is nowhere near as cool as Gran Turismo 3



COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **AUG 31**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **ACCLAIM STUDIOS**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**

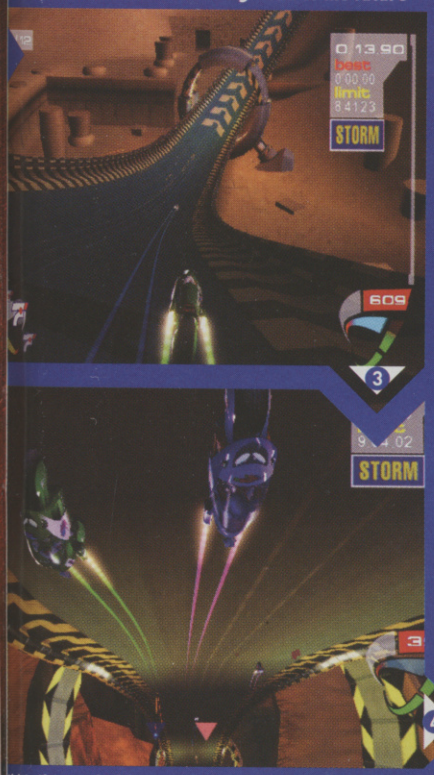
Let's face it, racing normal cars around flat stretches of tarmac can get boring. We want high-tech future bikes bristling with state-of-the-art weapons systems, top speeds that break the sound barrier and tracks that look like someone tipped a load of giant spaghetti over New York. Yeah, that should make things more interesting. Well, whaddaya know, someone has kindly turned this dream into a reality and called it Extreme G-3.

THIRD TIME LUCKY

If you were wondering, the '3' comes from the fact there have been two previous Extreme Gs on Nintendo 64. But forget that, because comparing them to G-3 on PlayStation 2 is like comparing sleeping to bungee jumping out of a hot air balloon.

The main game is a Championship set-up. You progress through leagues as well as earning money to pay for your moves up the ladder. Winning every race will easily give you enough moolah, but there are 11 other riders in each one, and

Boy racer antics on the ring-road of the future



...ick to the track this way up. Don't even think about it...

The winding tracks blast through some amazing-looking scenery. This course is suspended over – and under – an ocean. Don't stop to look at the dolphins, you're racing to win, clown

they're all heavily armed and out to get you. You have to power up your own weapons and blow them all to hell.

SPLASH THE CASH

Cash you earn can also be used to buy upgrades for your bike. Choose from progressively better engines, or a selection of mean and dirty weapons. You start out with a puny machine-gun, so heat-seeking missiles, mines and a backwards-firing gun turret are optional extras you'll want to pick off the upgrade list pretty quickly. Your hard-earned cash can also be used to enter Time Trials, which are useful for practising and there are rewards for setting new records.

Spiral helixes – perfect for hangovers

The city stages are the best looking

Why do ice levels always have caves?

Extreme G-3 has to be one of the nicest looking racers on PS2 so far, aside from the mighty Gran Turismo 3, of course. You compete in brilliantly realised futuristic cities, lush jungles, icy wastelands and even in the middle of oceans with transparent pipes carrying the track underwater. Each track is an insane rollercoaster of loops and death-defying vertical or inverted sections. It's a shame the bikes themselves are fairly boring to look at – there's not a lot you can do with what is basically a big stick on wheels.

AIR BRAKES, NOT AIR BISCUITS

The control system makes good use of the Dual Shock, with steering and gas on the sticks, although you can accelerate with the X button if you prefer. L2 and R2 control air-brakes, which are essential for getting round sharper corners. Overuse them, though, and you'll feel the back end of the bike start to slide. You soon learn to balance it, and once you do the smooth controls are one of G-3's high points.

Once you've started to upgrade your bike, awesome speeds are possible. In fact, on long straights you can go so fast you break the sound barrier. This happens at about 750mph, and when you hit this speed everything goes eerily quiet, except for the swishing of trackside objects as they go past. Be careful though, because the faster you go, the easier it is to smash into a wall and lose loads of energy and vital track positions.

CVG FACT

The official Land Speed Record, set by Thrust SSC, is 763.035mph – over 20mph faster than the speed of sound!

Go too fast and fall off the track

For your 40 quid, Extreme G-3 delivers insanely quick racing action, nice graphics, and a cool Ministry of Sound soundtrack. What you don't get it is much soul. Yeah, G-3 is perfectly competent at everything it does, but there simply isn't quite the happy vibe that you feel when you're playing an essential game.

CVG RECKONS

G-3 looks the business and plays well enough, but it still feels a little soulless. But if you like your racing futuristic, it will do nicely 'til Wipeout Fusion arrives. **Steve F**

7

If you like this try these...
Wipeout Special Edition (PSone)

Resident Evil Co

COST: **£44.99**
OUT: **SEPTEMBER 7**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**
PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**

Remember the satisfaction of blowing a zombie's head off in Resident Evil 2? The click of the hammer hitting the shell, then 'Blam!' – his bonce disappeared in a cloud of claret gunk. It was a classic videogaming moment, one that defines Res Evil games.

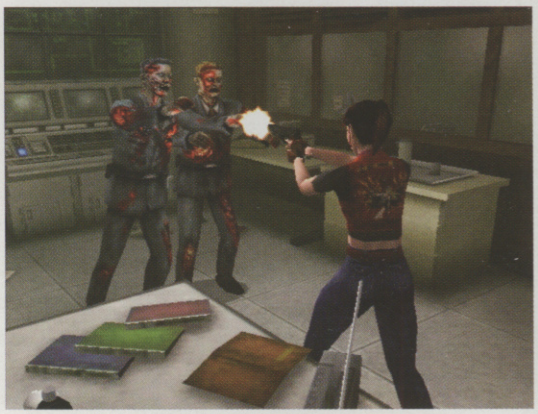
Blood-spattered head shots are thin on the ground in Code Veronica, at least for the first couple of hours' play. In fact, you'll spend what seems like an eternity wandering around with nothing more than a combat knife, a pistol and sod all ammo. Not good considering there are zombies around every corner.

Persevere and your patience is rewarded with classic Res Evil tools of destruction, like the shotgun and grenade launcher. That's when the fun really begins, nuking undead suckers with explosive shells, then realising you should've saved the biggest weapons for the boss monsters, which are far tougher than those in previous Res Evil games.

FAMILIAR TO MILLIONS

Thing is, while you're legging it around dusty mansions and deserted streets, you can't help thinking Resident Evil Code: Veronica X doesn't offer anything new. The control system is the same as before, and suffers from the same problems; Claire relentlessly runs on the spot when she reaches a wall, the fixed camera angles make it difficult to target enemies lurking off-screen, and you only find many of the objects by walking along every edge of the room, tapping the 'use' button in the hope of finding something useful.

And though it looks sharper than the first three Res Evils, it's far from being a PS2 benchmark. It's all... well, kind of grey. It's almost impossible to pick out detail when you're walking through some of the rooms. Fair enough, it's supposed to add tension, but you'll spend more time

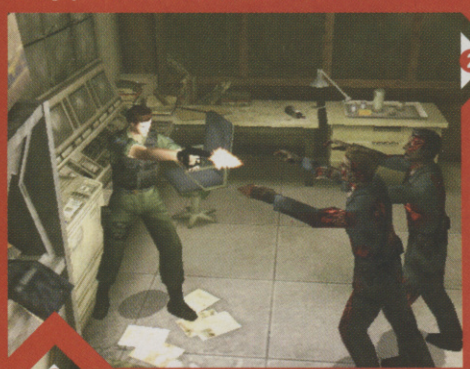


"Okay, who left the top off the ketchup bottle again?"

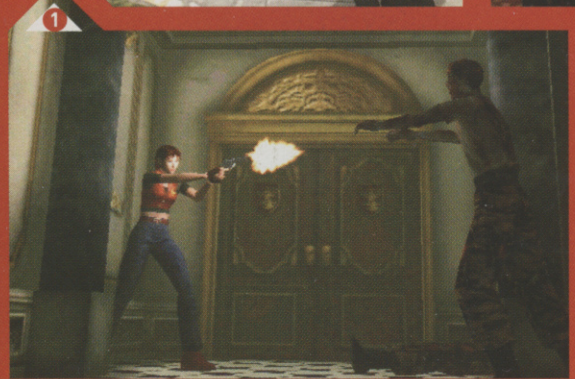
CVG FACT

Originally Jason Patric was rumoured to play the lead role in the Resident Evil movie, but was ditched after trashy sequel Speed 2 was released.

This guy's shooter is not much better either



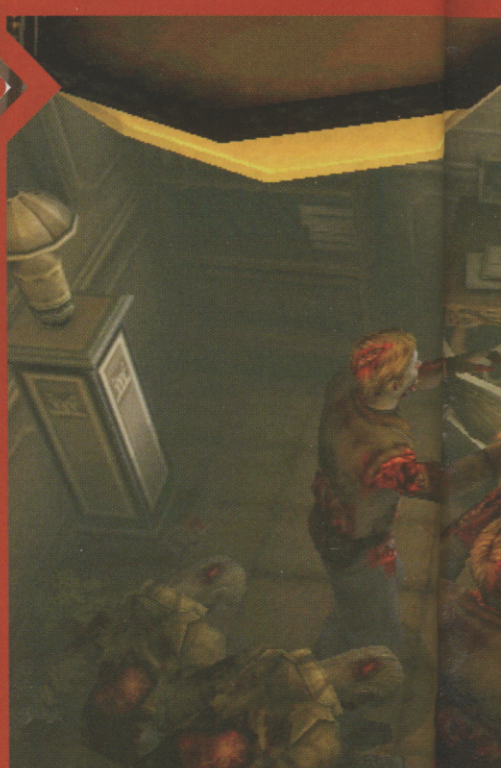
The bow is class, especially with explosive ammo



Things start off slow, with Claire brandishing a pathetic pistol with naff all stopping power. Time for a change...

FIGHTING BATTLES TO WIN THE WAR

If you're familiar with Resident Evil, you'll pick up Code: Veronica in seconds. The gameplay is a carbon copy of previous Res Evil games, with the hero – in this case, Claire Redfield – scouring gritty locations, picking up ammo and objects to kill zombies and solve puzzles. Unfortunately, you have to play Code: Veronica solidly for at least three hours before you get to the decent weapons – it's shooters like the twin Uzis and the shotgun that really dish the dirt.



Want to really see some blood fly? Open fire with t *mach*

ode: Veronica X

Code: Veronica on PlayStation 2 – something new or simply deja vu?

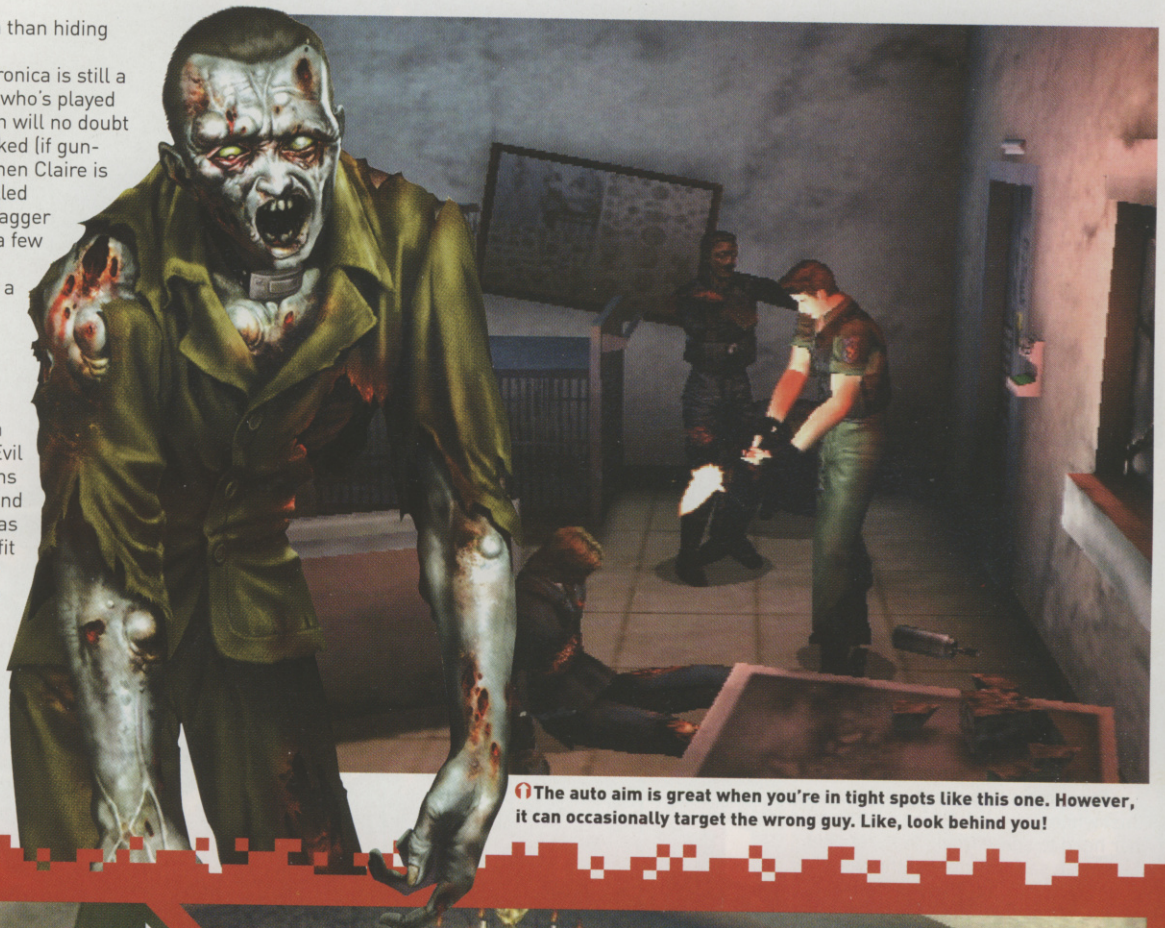
squinting at the screen than hiding behind the sofa.

That said, Code: Veronica is still a good game, as anyone who's played the identical DC version will no doubt tell you. It's action-packed (if gun-light) from the start, when Claire is dumped in a zombie-filled graveyard with only a dagger to save her skin. After a few well-placed stabs, the undead are slumped in a pool of blood and the puzzling begins.

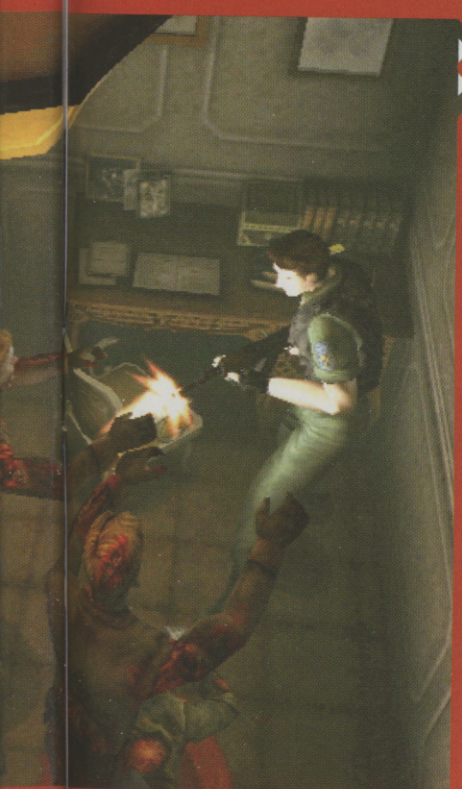
BRAWN Vs BRAINS

The balance of gunplay and puzzle solving is on par with previous Res Evil games, and the solutions to the problems are found in much the same way as before. Finding keys to fit locks is the main cause of headaches, but there are some meatier logic puzzles to tackle later on. It's hardly Mensa-rated stuff, though.

As for combat, it couldn't easier. Tap the aim button to draw a bead on an enemy, then rattle through the



The auto aim is great when you're in tight spots like this one. However, it can occasionally target the wrong guy. Like, look behind you!



machine-gun and watch the claret spray!

Two down and two to go. Explosive weapons like the grenade launcher and crossbow are best saved for tough boss monsters, but they're also great for clearing out a roomful of zombies. Ammo's in short supply, though

This monster's swipes are lethal

ammo. Claire automatically targets the most threatening zombie, which is useful when the guy you're shooting at is off-screen. However, it doesn't work that well on fast-moving enemies, like bats. By the time you've fired, they've dodged your shot, and it's all too easy to die at the hands of a lame bat attack.

Luckily, healing herbs are never too far away but, along with your most powerful weapons, you're best off saving these for the tougher monsters. There's nothing more frustrating than getting halfway through and having to restart because you've run out of bullets and some giant mutant keeps kicking your arse.

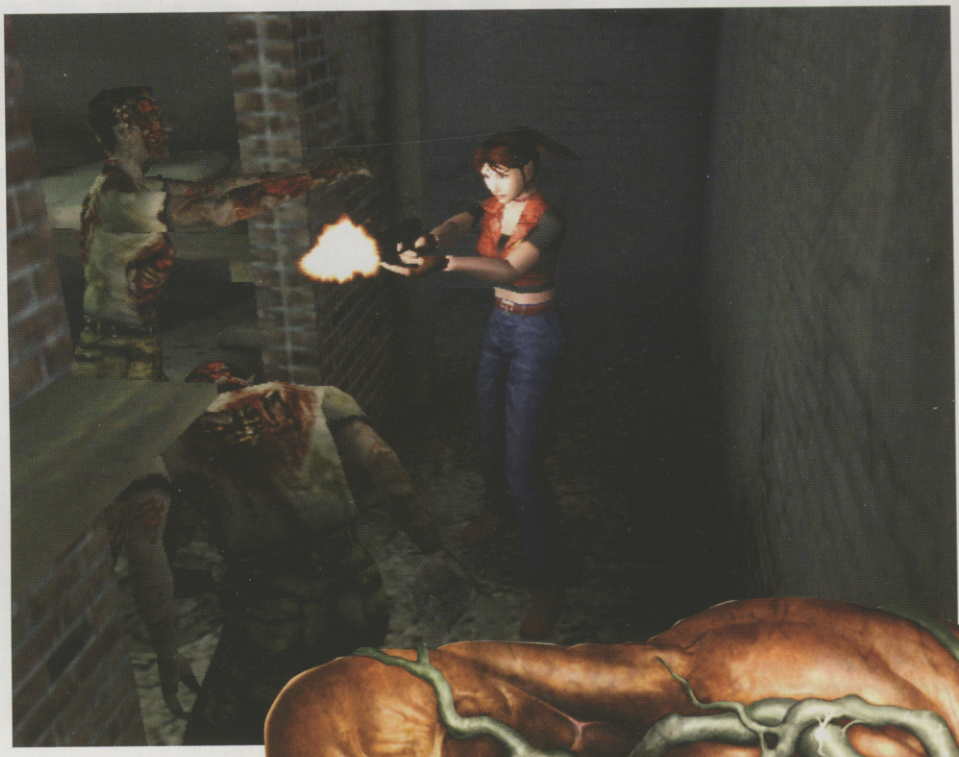
SCARY MOVIES

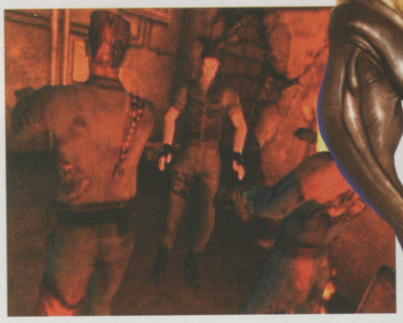
The highlight of Code: Veronica must be the cutscenes. They're sharp, the characters look great and the storyline, which carries the game, is genuinely interesting. Double-crosses, plots to infest the world with zombies, eccentric noblemen who turn out to be psychos... it's all there, and finding out what happens next often drives you to play further, even more than the desire to get the next weapon or fight the next boss.

There are some great set-pieces too. Just when you think Claire's going to lose her head to some freak, in bursts her tooled-up saviour, ripping through the enemy with double Uzis, complete with Matrix-style slow-motion effects.

If you haven't played the DC version of Code: Veronica, check out the PS2 version. Visually it's identical, the puzzles are the same and so are the extras, including a first-person mode which is unlocked after you complete the game. There is one bonus that's exclusive to this version though: you get a demo of Devil May Cry, Capcom's classy guns 'n' demons blaster. It's only a short sampler but it's so cool, and it'll give you a taste of what to expect from Res Evil next.

Visually, it's much sharper than other PS Res Evil games, but it all looks a bit grey





The cutscenes help to create tension

Sometimes it's better to run than stand and fight, especially as there's sod all ammo

CVG RECKONS

Slow to begin with, but stick with it and you'll lap up the frantic zombie-slaying and challenging puzzles. Shame it's no different from the older DC version though. **Alex**

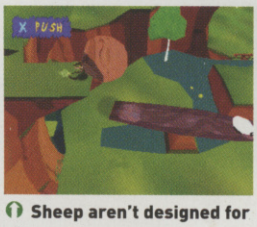
7

If you like this try these...
Resident Evil Nemesis (PSone, PC, DC)

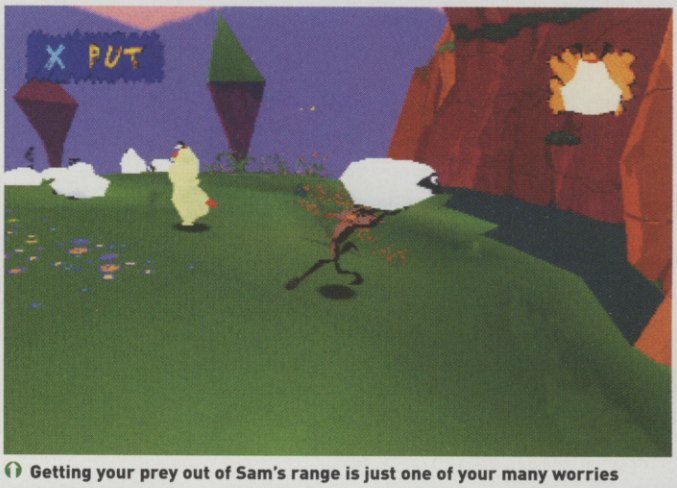
Sheep, Dog 'n' Wolf

This wolf can out-sneak Snake

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **SEPT 14**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **BLACK SHEEP**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**



Sheep aren't designed for these airborne antics



Getting your prey out of Sam's range is just one of your many worries

Sam the Sheepdog is tough. You need a cunning plan to nab one of his delicious sheep. So, disguised as a bush, you nervously tiptoe your way towards his tasty flock. When he's looking the other way, you hop out of your herbaceous hidey-hole and grab the nearest prey. Stupidly though, you start to run and the extra noise alerts Sam, who bolts over, grabs you by the neck and squashes your head with a swift sledgehammer fist. Arse it.

Though the wolf you play as may look like Road Runner's mate Wile E Coyote, the skills needed to succeed here are more Metal Gear than slapstick comedy. Y'see, being sneakier than a 20-stone porker trying to smuggle a marshmallow into a fat farm is the name of the game.

PASS THE MINT JELLY

Your aim is simple – nick off with one of Sam's potential lamb chops without him leathering you. There's a wide array of comedy gadgets, such as giant elastic bands and sheep suits to help you crack the 18 scenarios, but you'll have to think like a Looney Tune if you want to see any results.

LOOKING FOR LAMB CHOPS

Keep constant watch on the window showing what Sam is up to or he'll dash over and kick your head in

In your hunt for woolly victims, you'll have to find a way of getting among the flock without attracting Sam's attention. You have to don ridiculous disguises, create clever distractions, and use simple tiptoe stealth tactics to get close enough to make the steal. Make one false move and you're dogmeat.

When the warning light turns red, scarper

Need to get across a chasm with your sheep? See those two trees? What would Wile E Coyote do? Attach an elastic band to both and then catapult across. Easy when you know how, but much like all the puzzles in Wolf, you'll need a giant Acme box stuffed with patience, precision, cunning and mad ideas to progress.

Wolf can be frustrating and its learning curve is steep. But persevere and you'll reap the rewards. And providing Looney Tunes humour isn't a complete turn-off for you, it's also genuinely funny in a slapstick kind of way.

CVG RECKO

A fine mix of madcap puzzles, stealthy action and classic Looney Tunes comedy. **Mike C**

8

If you like this try these...
Metal Gear Solid (PSone)

The game begins and you're just cruising on the Tokyo highways. Drive up behind a potential rival and flash your lights to challenge them to a race. A database of rivals keeps you informed as to who's who

Your bar suffers when you crash into stuff

RIVAL RACING

The 'races' in TER are short-lived. You mosey up behind a potential rival and flash your lights at him to get him to race you. But instead of being decided by a finish line, you both get a power bar. Lag behind your rival and your bar starts depleting. Hit walls and other cars and it goes down too. It's an interesting twist on your typical racing game structure, but it means all your races are over in a minute and a half. Uninspiring handling doesn't help either.

When one of your bars

Tokyo Extreme

Half-arsed Jap racer eats dust in the wake of GT3

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **GENKI**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

A racing game whose selling point is its faithful recreation of the highways and underpasses of Tokyo kind of gets off on the wrong foot for the UK market. It's like us selling M25: London Orbital Derby or Birmingham Spaghetti Junction Racing to the Japanese.

But that's what TER is all about. It's a chance for Japanese drivers who spend half the day sitting bumper-to-bumper in traffic to burn off their frustration by racing like madmen up miles of Tokyo tarmac.

It looks sharp and there is a real feeling of speed, but clunky handling lets it all down

CVG FACT

They've crammed in more than 100 miles of realistically modelled Tokyo highway for the game.

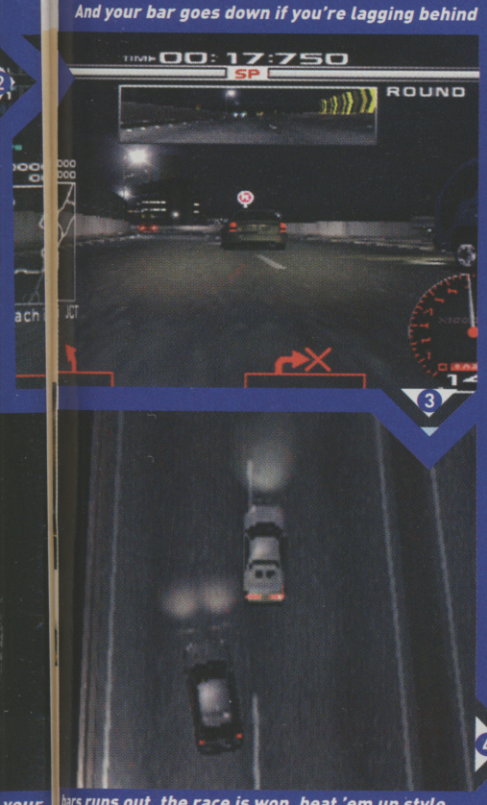
MANUAL RELIEF

Your first task is to make head or tail of the sparse on-screen information and shoddy manual. Do that and your career as highway child and best illegal driver on the Tokyo transit system begins.

The game revolves around you challenging other Tokyo joyriders to races on the highways. You choose a stretch of highway to hit and then drive around until you locate one of your rivals, get right up his backside and flash your lights at the git until he accepts and races you. These races are brief affairs decided not by crossing a finishing line but by racing better and faster than your opponent for a short while.

AUTO-EROTIC

The permanent night-time setting looks sharp with plenty of nice lighting touches and assorted traffic and road cleaners going about their business, though poor car models and a dodgy horizon effect spoil the mix. The GT-like Quest mode where you earn cash and kudos from defeating your rivals provides the meat of the one-player game, and though the actual racing gameplay may leave you cold, those who like to tinker with their motors will be happy as pigs in shit. To make any progress, you'll have to do more tuning up than the London Philharmonic

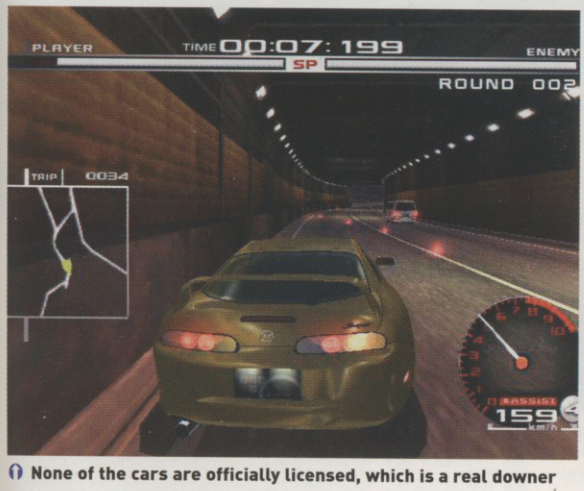


And your bar goes down if you're lagging behind

bars runs out, the race is won, beat 'em up style

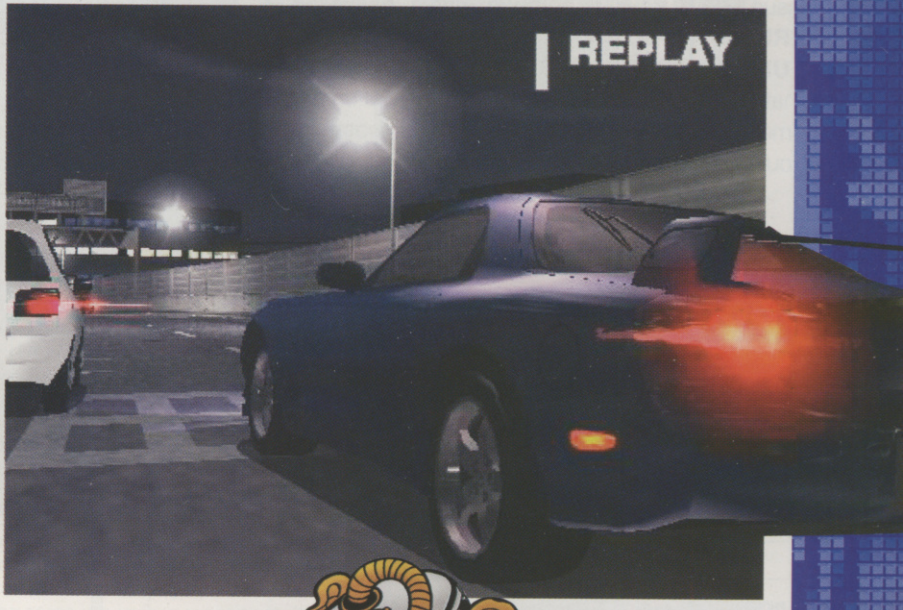
The trouble is, these races are mostly decided in under two minutes and leave little room for errors, strategy or much fun. At least you can direct your own replay after each one, though

Racing



None of the cars are officially licensed, which is a real downer

You can sum up this game's major problem in a few words: Gran Turismo 3. Any racer's gonna have problems competing with the daddy, let alone a sub-standard one



Orchestra. We had to enroll on a car mechanic's night school and we still didn't know what half the modifications were.

'I DRIVE AN ONAN TUG 550'

The cars, while clearly modelled on real life vehicles, are just given code numbers and don't have any of the real insignia or markings. Choosing between the Type MZ55001 and the Mark XX020 is not quite as exciting as making that decision whether to buy a TVR Speed 12 or a Mazda MX8 to say the least.

The sound effects are passable, which is more than can be said for the dire soundtrack. What is it with Japanese racing games and monkey-spanking guitar-bashing '80s style soft rock soundtracks? Do Japanese drivers like to listen to this kind of stuff when they're driving? No wonder they've got such a bad road rage problem over there.

But among all these breakneck road duels fought out with scant regard for the speed limit, there are no police cars about, which is a crying shame. For a start they might add some much-needed excitement and tension to the lacklustre races. But even better, they might actually catch you and put a stop to it all.

CVG RECKONS

Released in the slipstream of The Most Awaited Racing Game Of All Time, TER looks distinctly Skoda-like next to the gleaming BMW that is GT3. Not even worth it at 20 quid. **Steve O**

5

If you like this try these...
Gran Turismo 3 (PS2), Metropolis Street Racer (DC)

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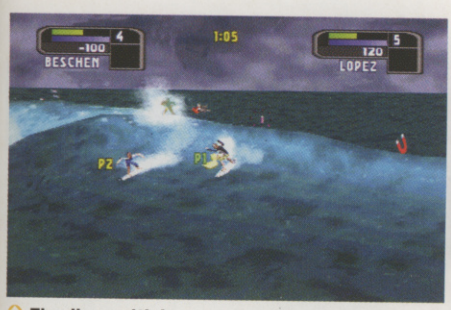


The dire multiplayer game will make you cringe

This move is known as a floater. Say no more

There's an appallingly weak array of tricks

Championship Surfer

Extreme sports are all the rage. Except this one, that is

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **KROME STUDIO**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

Imagine lying on your surfboard and waiting for the terror of the ocean to erupt into a menacing skyscraper of water... but only a pathetic little wave pops up instead. What a let-down. And sadly that's as good as it gets in Championship Surfer. You try to be positive and hop on to your board with the aim of pulling off some crazy tricks.

Fat chance. See, Championship Surfer is about as extreme and entertaining as your granny's thimble collection.

Name one great surfing game and we'll give you a Ferrari. In fact, we'll buy you a whole fleet. You can't, can you? Because all surfing games to date have been pony and Championship Surfer is no exception.

Working out how to stay on the wave is the first major challenge, and once you've mastered that frustrating skill, the rest is all downhill. Controlling your rider is stupidly hard, and landing tricks is totally unrewarding because the moves in this game are utterly uninspired. The overall gameplay stinks worse than a skunk's sphincter, and although the repetitive multiplayer mode is worth a bash just for the sheer appaling comedy value, you'll be reaching to turn the power off before you can scream WIPE OUT!

CVG RECKONS

This sucks. You'll have more fun and extreme rip-curling action playing in the bath with Mr Ducky and Sergeant Submarine. **Mike C**

2

If you like this try these...
Tony Hawk's 2 (DC, PS1, GBA), SSX (PS2)

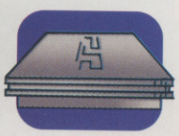
The Flintstones In Viva Rock Vegas

An awful movie, a totally rubbish game

Only four cars per race makes for dull driving

Power-ups in boxes! My goodness, how original

The cars look cool, but drive like dinosaur doo-doo



COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **CONSPIRACY ENTERTAINMENT**
PUBLISHER: **SWING!**

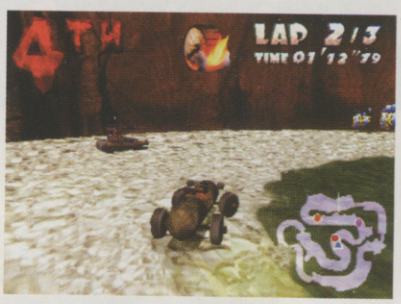
How this kart-racing shambles ever got approval from Sony's quality assurance bods is anyone's guess – we reckon they were all drunk when this slipped into their in-trays.

The game is a joyless experience. It's ugly, and has huge borders at the top and bottom of the screen. The graphics are dowdy and lack imagination. Even the cars are dull. There's just one championship mode with a handful of ill-designed tracks.

Worse still, is the disgusting way the cars handle, barely turning despite your mad efforts to powerslide around a bend. Failure often results in a weakly animated cliff-fall. Which isn't frustrating at all.

Add the most annoying power-ups ever seen, obscenely long loading times, and a super-foggy multiplayer game and you have a real contender for the worst PS2 game ever.

The map looks interesting, the track isn't



It's plain and brown, just like a turd

CVG RECKONS

Barely an afternoon's worth of play. How did it get released? **Lee**

2

If you like this try these...
Wacky Races (DC, PS2)

Dragon Riders: Chronicles Of Pern

Think dragon riding sounds cool? It's not

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **UBI STUDIOS UK**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

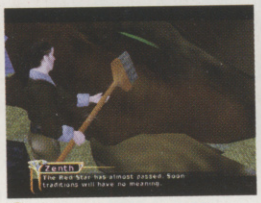
Oiling the dragon may sound like another way of saying galloping the lizard, but in this game it's a completely wholesome act that neither you nor the dragon need feel bashful about. It's just that from the moment you first have to do it, you'll be thinking, "What the hell have I let myself in for?"

That gut reaction happens for a reason: it's the brain telling the body to get up and turn off the Dreamcast. Because playing Dragon Riders is about as entertaining as watching a 24-hour Ground Force TV marathon.

SISQO WOULD LOVE IT

If you expect a fast-paced 3D adventure with lots of magic, fantasy and a bit of dragon steering, you'll be sorely disappointed. Though Dragon Riders looks all right, its mind-numbing pace will reduce you to tears and exploring the dull environments is about as engaging as having a conversation with a corpse. Combined with long loading times, the whole thing becomes inaccessible and unrewarding with all sense of adventure surgically removed.

Though it looks quite good, exploration is totally boring



Oiling the dragon. Nice

The dialogue is pap

This game will break your patience in half

CVG RECKONS

You'd find more thrills and adventure at an octogenarians' disco. **Mike C**

5

If you like this try these...
Onimusha (PS2), Drakan (PC)

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Baldur's Gate II: Throne Of Bhaal

Tie up all those loose ends with this huge add-on

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-6**
DEVELOPER: **BIOWARE**
PUBLISHER: **BLACK ISLE STUDIOS**

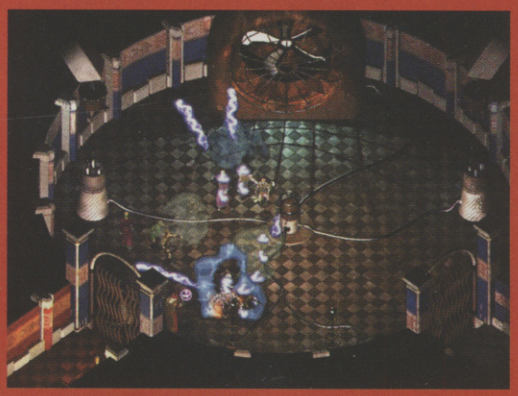
Remember kids: never play with matches

It was somewhat inevitable that a big, best-selling RPG like Baldur's Gate II was going to get an add-on. After all, there were so many loose ends at the end of the game, it would have been a heinous crime to leave the tale unfinished. Throne of Bhaal is not just a couple of extra areas cobbled together in a hurry, though. Whereas Icewind Dale's add-on was disappointingly small, Throne of Bhaal is so big it hurts.

As a child of the murder god, Bhaal, you must face other Bhaal children in a confrontation reminiscent of the Highlander movies. With over 30 hours of gameplay, you can now raise yourself to a suitably god-like level 40, giving you access to amazing spells and attacks. You have the option to bring back any or all of your old party, but you can also recruit your old nemesis Sarevok, who has mellowed since the original Baldur's Gate.

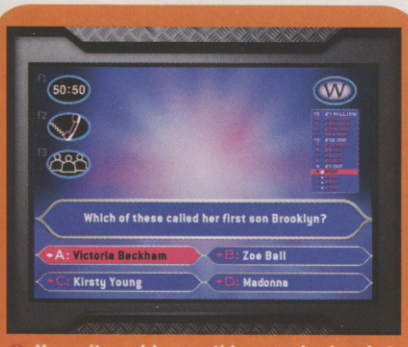
This is a fitting end to a popular saga, and will please everyone who enjoyed BGII.

9



Little Johnny's science project got out of hand again

Golems never seem to get any easier



Hmm, it would seem this game is aimed at seven year-olds and Sun readers

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? Junior

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **HOT HOUSE**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

Do you want to be a millionaire? If so, don't buy this as it will only put you 20 quid further away from your goal. Few releases in gaming history have been as pointless and as irritating as this.

You answer questions aimed at kids while watching an empty TV studio and listening to bloody Tarrant. It's a no-win situation: within a half-hour you'll have either 'won' the million, or you'll have got some answers wrong in a quiz game aimed at seven year-olds and been branded a cretin by all present.

1

Action Man: Mission Xtreme

COST: **£9.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **INTERACTIVE STUDIOS**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

He's better than Barbie but it still doesn't mean this plastic doll is cool

Action dolls are fun for kids, but they don't make for good videogames. This game tries to incorporate as many different styles of gameplay as possible to make it irresistibly varied and fun.

There are driving and shooting sections, Metal Gear-style stealth bits, and mini-games and puzzles. Unfortunately, played individually, each section is crap. The driving is like something that would have got laughed out of arcades years ago, the stealthy bits are bland, and most of the puzzles are a doddle. Avoid.

3

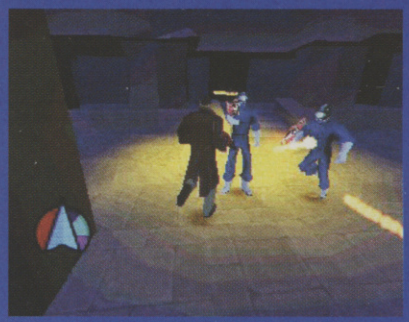
Roswell Conspiracies

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **RED LEMON**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

Based on the not-so-famous cartoon show, Roswell Conspiracies sets you the task of saving the world from aliens who are using humanity for food.

You play one of the agents from the show and peg it around solving puzzles and blasting ETs in a third-person 3D affair. A little bit Tomb Raider and a little bit Syphon Filter, Roswell Conspiracies has practically nothing new to offer. If you're a fan of the show you might have some fun, but for the rest of us it's too boring for words.

4



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A can of Lynx deodorant or a flame-throwing canister of doom? Who cares? Just kill!

Your puny knife isn't going to help you here

Suck it up as you explore the murky corridors

BACK TRACK

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-4 (4 CARTS)**
OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
DEVELOPER: **JV GAMES**
PUBLISHER: **TELEGAMES**

Only Nintendo could release an old-skool 2D console with no dedicated 3D oomph into a 3D-fixated gaming world and still come out on top. As glorious as the 2D GBA games have been so far, the quest for the first 3D first-person shooter on GBA has become a kind of Holy Grail for games developers. With Doom coming out for Christmas, and the promising multiplayer action of Dark Arena to look out for, the race is on to be first to snatch the prize.

It's all a bit 1989 in the world of Back Track - nice costumes, yes?

TRIP TO THE PAST

Telegames wins the first round by leading the charge with Back Track – a futuristic 'shoot first, never ask questions' mission to rescue imprisoned humans and kick alien ass. Ignore all you know about epic plotting like Deus Ex and pretend like Quake 3 never happened because Back Track does, and it's the only way you'll enjoy this old-skool shooter. Look past the game's limitations, like the short field of vision and repetitive nature of play, and you'll find an enjoyably brainless shoot 'em up.

Levels and maps are samey, but thankfully the range and destructive force of the weapons you pick up keeps things interesting. As well as the standard-issue knife and pistol, you get to tear up the enemy with a railgun, laser, slingshot, a makeshift flame-thrower and even a crazy vacuum cleaner. Eat hoover, dumbasses.

Back Track is by no means a great game, but it is an enjoyable stop-gap to amuse you until something just a little classier comes along. It's also a good technological showcase for the first of its kind on Game Boy Advance. It moves smoothly and at a cracking pace, and includes a very playable four-player deathmatch game too. Just don't expect too much, that's all.

DS

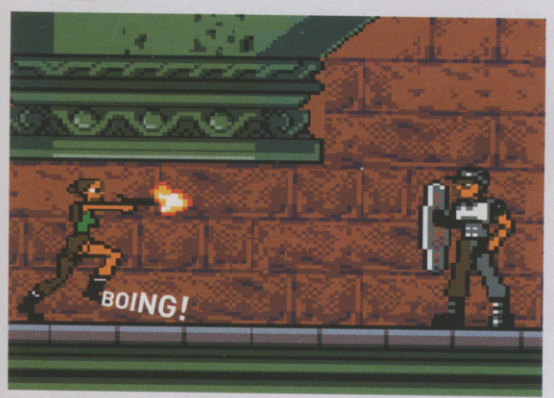
HANDS BUSY

CVG's caned Mario Kart on GBA to death and it's class!

Don't miss Spidey's first outing on Advance, it's the best way to get sticky palms

TOMB RAIDER: CURSE OF THE SWORD

COST: **£24.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **CORE**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**



Bang! Shoot the guy with the shield then leap over his corpse!

New dilemma, same old formula. Swinging over a pit of razor-sharp bones, clinging on to a set of wires that dangle from the ceiling, you leap across to a safe platform and activate a generator that makes the lift work in another area of the level. But now electricity pumps through the wires overhead, leaving you trapped.

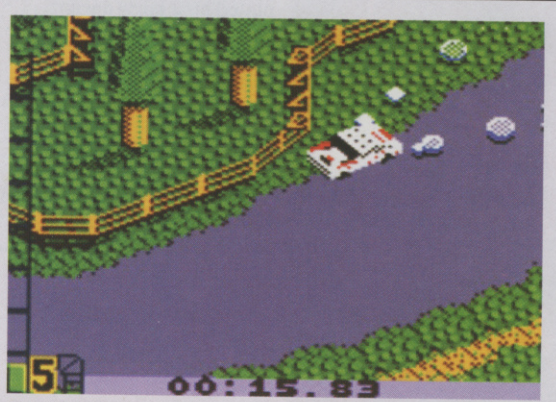
Sounds familiar? It is, it's Tomb Raider. But although we've seen it all before, it still manages to keep you entertained. Here's why...

LUVVLY JUBBLY

Who needs weapons? With Page Three-sized puppies that bounce around like a couple of giant rubber balls on slack springs, it's surprising Lara ever has to use her guns on anyone. But aside from the charms of her newly animated ample chest, Curse of the Sword sees our Lara bounding through a new challenging adventure that plays just like the first Tomb Raider game on Game Boy Color. The only real differences between the two are a fresh set of levels and new puzzles to overcome.

Switch-flicking, gun-toting, skimpy shorts-wearing platform action is what you're in for here. If you loved the original, you might be a tad disappointed by the lack of innovative progression in the series, but if you're new to Lara on GBC, Curse of the Sword should sufficiently feed your need for classic Tomb Raider action.

7



It's a bit like having GT3 on your GBC – quality racing action

COLIN McRAE RALLY

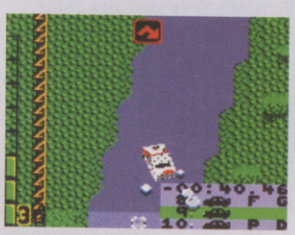
COST: **£24.99**
PLAYERS: **2**
OUT: **SEPT 7**
DEVELOPER: **CODEMASTERS**
PUBLISHER: **THQ**

Power-sliding around a hairpin, your back end starts to slip out of control. But, remembering you're the famous Colin McRae, with a bit of over-steering and skill you pull your mud machine back on to the straight and tear off to the next checkpoint.

DIRTY LONG SKIDS

From the moment you hit your first track, the smooth and intuitive handling of the cars will immediately impress you. And, much like the majority of great driving sims, such as GT3 and Metropolis Street Racer, it takes a fair old bit of perseverance to master the skills. Once you do though, you'll be cutting through the sloppy mud faster than a horny greyhound who's just spotted a kennel full of bitches on heat.

There are more than 25 tracks to unlock in the Championship mode, and far more options than you can shake a gearstick at. The only minor quibble is that, considering this is a rally game, you don't get to smash into and cut up other cars. Colin McRae Rally is a slick racer that'll have you pushing your driving skills to the limit in pursuit of excellence, but after a while you'll be begging for some AI interference.



Looks plain, plays beautifully

7

ARMY MEN ADVANCE

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **3DO**
PUBLISHER: **3DO**

It seems no console is safe from the infamous little green freaks, but rather than infecting GBA with the usual sub-standard, plasticky muck, the Army Men have actually pulled off a fairly decent pocket-sized adventure.

Ambushed in the toystack

BEST OF THE BUNCH

Army Men Advance is far more playable than any other AM game so far, but then again that's not so hard. Tackle the sprawling top-down maps and solve simple puzzles to progress, like flicking switches in the right order. There are loads of shoot-outs too, and the simple controls make blasting holes in your rivals' bodies fun in an evil kind of way.

Army Men Advance looks plain and the gameplay is simple but by no means overly flawed. What it does, it does competently and you'll be playing this for far longer than any other Army Men game. It doesn't do anything that couldn't really be done on GBC but it's not a bad way to pass the time on long car journeys,but only if you can pick it up cheap.

A good Army Men game? Oh mercy!

HOT POTATO!

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **SPIKE**
PUBLISHER: **BAM! ENTERTAINMENT**

Aside from the frustrate-o-magic joy of Kuru Kuru Kururin, GBA doesn't serve up much meat for players hungry for a nice rare puzzle game steak. Hot Potato! is the only other dish on the menu and, like an anchovy blancmange, it's something of an acquired taste.

Lots going on here but make sure you hit the big spud for a bonus

SPUD-U-LOVE

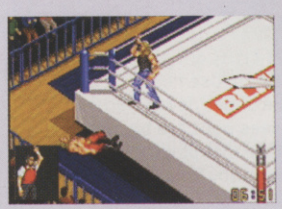
You take control of a school-bus load of girl potatoes and have to play matchmaker by firing them out into the road at boy potatoes of the same colour. The developers may have sucked in too many strange fumes from marker pens, but as weird as it is, the game works. There are plenty of chances for bonuses too and new challenges are introduced on each stage. It's darned addictive too. Hot Potato! clearly isn't in the same league as Tetris or Bust-A-Move, but good nonetheless.

FIRE PRO WRESTLING

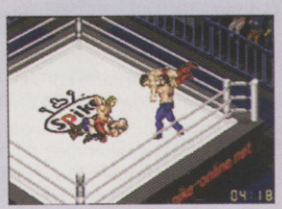
COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **PUKKA GAMES**
PUBLISHER: **BAM! ENTERTAINMENT**

As much as we like wrestling, we couldn't find a place in our full Spandex body suits for Fire Pro. On paper the game looks promising, with more than 1200 moves, 150 characters from different fighting disciplines and a decent selection of play modes. There's even a four-player battle option where you and your buddies can hurt each other all at once to see who's King. Throw in a create-a-wrestler mode and you'd think you might have a hit on your hands, but instead what you get is something that rhymes with it.

Fighters are jerky, moves are fiddly to pull off due to clumsy controls and the graphics are barely a step up from GBC. Hardcore WWF and UFC fans will laugh this out of the ring as soon as they see it and, aside from the four-player, there's very little appeal for anyone else. The most annoying thing is that there's a lot of potential in Fire Pro. It's got modes, players and moves galore but is lacking in playability. If it was a real wrestler it would need a heavy course of steroids to get up to scratch.



Pummel rivals in and out of ring

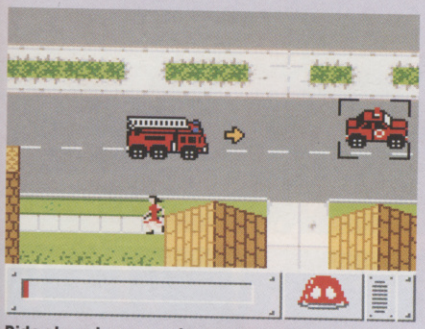


Four-player is barely okay

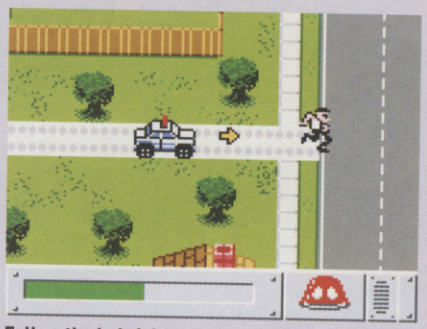
MATCHBOX EMERGENCY PATROL

COST: **£24.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **MATTEL**
PUBLISHER: **THQ**

Ahh, the nostalgic prang of tin against tin, the rattle and scrape of plastic along skirting boards and the high-pitched cries of "nee-naw, nee-naw, nee-naw", as yet another imaginary fire is put out by a dinky red fire engine. If you're 18 years old and still want to play with your collection of Matchbox toy cars, we have good news for you: there is now a way to do it without your mates branding you a total loser – they've made the transition to the world of games, if only on GBC.



Ride along in convoy in a race to save the town



Follow the helpful arrow to catch the bandit

SAVE THE CITY

The game is a mixture of Driver's missions and the emergency-fixing fun of City Crisis. Follow the arrows on screen to locate the emergency that needs sorting out and then blast round the city for your next job. You get to drive fire engines and douse towering infernos, as well as hopping behind the wheel of police cars to apprehend bank robber-types. There's a stack of locations too and the graphics are cute with toy cars looking just like the cars of your youth. Emergency Patrol won't please wannabe villains, but even the most hardened criminal will warm to the game's do-gooding charm.

CVG NUT-O-GRAPH

Two Laras loose on the streets, but which of the buxom beauties is crazy enough to warrant a stay in CVG's padded cell?

LARA CROFT	ANGELINA JOLIE
Large-chested videogame star	Large-chested movie star

MADDEST MOMENTS

LARA CROFT	ANGELINA JOLIE
Happily runs at breakneck speeds head first into walls again and again	Keeps a vial of her husband's blood around her neck so she feels close to him when apart
Lara's far too eager to blast endangered species like tigers (not to mention extinct dinosaurs) into a bloody pulp for getting in her way	Angelina used to feel like she was competing with the digital Ms Croft as ex-hubby Johnny Lee Miller played Tomb Raider all the time
Those crazy pointy breasts – you'd hurt yourself if you leaped on her in a fit of passion	Those mad Lilo-lips can be used as a life-raft should you get stranded at sea

THROW AWAY THE KEY

Ms Jolie is clearly eccentric but how could we incarcerate such a thing of beauty? After years of adventures and a few too many tired sequels, digital Lara is the babbling beauty that gets strapped to our shock machine and fed cold mush for tea. She'll only get out if Core pull something special out of the bag for her first PS2 romp.

HOT NEWS

Both reaching stardom on PSone, Crash and Spyro are going to hit our beloved GBA, with Spyro: Fire & Ice out in November this year, and Crash Bandicoot GBA arriving way off in March 2002.

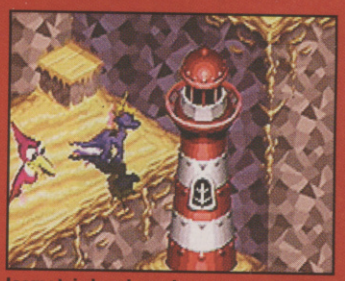
CRASH

Crash Bandicoot's appearance on the little Game Boy wonder will see him smashing his way through 20 levels using all of his famous signature moves. The game is presented mostly in 2D, although there will be some 3D chase levels and airborne antics thrown in for good measure, and with three modes of single-player action – Story, Gem Collecting and Time Trial – Crash fans should be howling like slobbering banshees with anticipation.

Simple but excellent – Crash is coming

SPYRO

GBA is calling out for good adventure games, and while super-cutesy Spyro might not be everyone's favourite hero, with any luck this could meet the grade. The dinky dragon sets out on a 3D adventure with new worlds to explore, fresh faces to meet, and more puzzles to solve. See it here first.



Isometric levels and sweet graphics

Looks almost as good as he did on PS

MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

PLAYERS: **1-4**
OUT: **SEPTEMBER 14**
DEVELOPER: **NINTENDO**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**

It's a game with the power to reduce even the burliest, beefiest games-playing hardcase to tears of joy. It's undoubtedly the most eagerly awaited GBA game to date. And it's one step closer to making the GBA Holy Trinity of a new Mario Kart, a new Zelda and a new GBA Pokemon a mouth-watering reality. Mario Kart Advance is here and until you've played it, you'll never really know quite how awesome it is.

In a month that sees the spleen-bustingly bad Flintstones racing game crash on to PS2, and with about a zillion other imitations on the shelves already, Mario Kart serves as a brilliant reminder of why everyone has been copying its formula in the years since it rocked the gaming world on SNES. Practically everything that made the SNES version such a masterpiece is here. The expert handling, the simple but fiendish track design, the unrivalled level structure, the gameplay balance and a learning curve plucked right off the dream-game tree. Every drop of Mario Kart's juice is delicious and you'll be coming back to lap it up again and again.

Like before, each karter has different skills. Peach is good at corners

What a gallery of gaming greats

Presentation is on full-throttle

DON'T FIGHT THE POWER

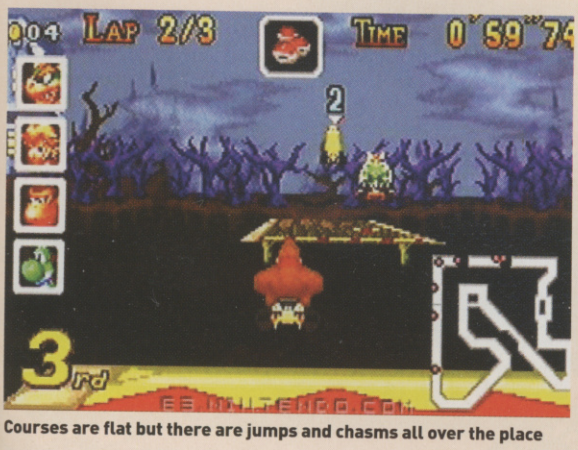
One key difference from the SNES lies in the power-ups. When you grabbed a power-up on SNES Kart it stayed nabbed, resulting in frantic scrambles for the last weapon on the final lap. GBA Kart opts instead for the less-popular N64 style regenerating power-ups. It's a minor issue though, and it won't mean diddly to you if you've never played the SNES game.

The new Bowzer's castle areas play just like the SNES ones, including those bloody Thwomps. Looks like Mazza's about to get intimate with one

The backgrounds are lush but it's the speed of the racing and the fact there are loads of you on screen at the same time that makes this so cool

"It's like your best Christmas, birthday and sexual experience combined"

And even if it does bother you, there's so much else crammed into the wee cartridge that you'll be distracted into open-mouthed, joy-filled silence anyway. We're talking multiplayer here – the reason the original was so damn cool. Up to four players can link up, and depending on how many carts you have, a whole range of multiplayer games are open to you. With just one cart you get to play the Yoshi race game around a selection of tarted-up tracks from the original SNES game. Pretty wicked, but with one cart per person you get that plus Battle modes galore and the chance to go head-to-head in the proper Championship Cup games. Fully awesome.



Courses are flat but there are jumps and chasms all over the place

Ice is nice – but a bit slippery

Donkey Kong wins first place!

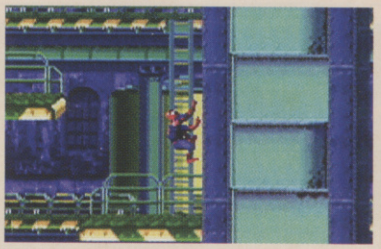
THE ANSWER TO ALL OUR PRAYERS

Our biggest worry about GBA Mario Kart was that the market is so flooded with awful and average karters that Mario might have become a victim of his own success and seemed just another pointless addition to the pack. But the beautiful truth is that Mario has come back to show everyone else exactly how it should be done. You may have thought Konami Krazy Racers was good, but Mario Kart will blow a big go-kart shaped hole in your head and leave you a drooling wreck. Start saving – you won't need another handheld game all Autumn.

CVG RECKONS

Mario Kart Advance lives up to its own hype and leaks quality out of every pore. It's so good it almost heals all the world's hurts and you can't help but smile. Perfection will be in the palm of your hand this September.

Use your special web-shield to deflect bullets and trap the goons. Spidey's gonna rock!



Climb up walls, ceilings, everything

Spidey lurks beneath a streetlamp

SPIDER-MAN: MYSTERIO'S MENACE

PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **SEPTEMBER 21**
DEVELOPER: **VICARIOUS VISIONS**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Comic book characters tend to have a funny habit of popping up in videogames, and the GBA looks like it's going to be the coolest new place for superheroes to hang out. With Batman and the X-Men getting ready to flex their super-pecs on GBA later this year, guess who's going to be first on the scene to show the citizens of club Nintendo how it should be done? His royal stickiness, Spidey, that's who.

GBA allows for some tasty special effects, like this flame breath

"You should be crawling up the walls with sticky anticipation"

ARACHNOMANIA

For those of you familiar with Spidey's antics on PSone and DC, the action in Mysterio's Menace should put a cheesy superhero grin on your face. In this 2D side-scrolling platformer, you'll be leaping between buildings, web-slinging, wall-clinging, and goon-bashing from the start, and faced with a classic mission of saving the city from the evil plans of a demented villain by the name of Mysterio.

STICKY PALM ACTION

Set in that famously crime-riddled area of Manhattan, you find yourself battling baddies at all levels, kicking butt on skyscrapers and down on the streets. Like Spider-Man 2 on GBC, the action is frequent, fast and in your face, and as you'd expect, Mysterio's Menace looks a whole lot sweeter on Nintendo's new pocket wonder. Spidey is cool, and knowing he's going to grace your GBA should have you crawling up the walls with sticky anticipation.

CVG RECKONS

This latest addition in the Spidey series bears all the hallmarks of a great little platforming action game – a super-cool hero, buckets of butt-kicking action and the ability to stick to stuff.

JURASSIC PARK III: THE DNA FACTOR

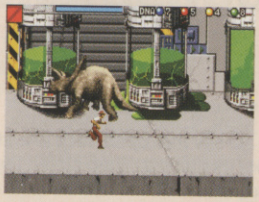
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **AUGUST**
DEVELOPER: **KONAMI**
PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**

Fact one: everyone and their dog loves dinosaurs. Fact two: there have been quite a few Jurassic Park games and they've all been stinkier than a football-sized T-Rex turd. Fact three: everyone really loves dinosaurs, it's a GBA game, and we want it to be cool. Fact four: we're probably all deluded fools.

SNAP HAPPY

Jurassic Park III throws hoards of hungry dinos your way, and as usual they're not the plant-eating species. Action sees you jumping around 12 levels in 2D environments based on the world of the new movie with the task of recovering some DNA capsules (like the name isn't exactly enough of a clue). Pretty standard stuff, and on looks alone Jurassic Park III on GBA doesn't seem that special. We've not seen that much of this, but check our review next issue to find out if the gameplay at least has some bite.

Not in-game footage but still lovely



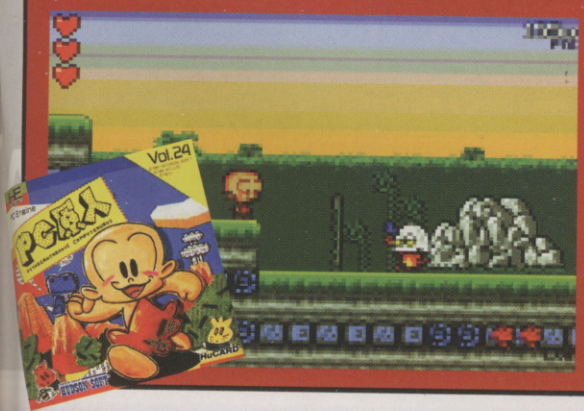
Cover the dino in green goop!

Looks like a Pitfall game

Dinos look pretty sweet

HEROES & HARDNUTS

LIKE JASON from Friday the 13th? Then you'll love the hockey mask-wearing badass star of Splatterhouse. Back in the days of the handheld PC Engine, Splatterhouse rocked the pocket world with its brutal and bloody hack 'n' slash action. And the main character, whoa, is he mean. He'd shoot your guts out and trample all over them without so much as batting an eyelid. Yep, he's one cold mo-fo that's for sure.



PC KID was just so cool it hurts, but for some unfathomable reason, he never managed to make the gaming big time. But now you can bounce your way through the first PC Kid game on the handheld PC Engine and see why he should be a superstar. Head-butting, kebab-eating, and getting so angry his that his head exploded like a volcano were just a few of his class-A characteristics. Bring back the kid!

INCOMING

MATT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX

It's like Tony Hawk's with a BMX

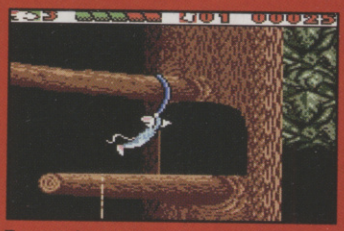
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX hits the UK in November and if the extreme gameplay is in keeping with the likes of Tony Hawk's 2 on GBA, it'll be a must-have title. Like, er, totally bodacious. Or something. Mat Hoffman's bike-spinning stuff look like they could get heads turning and fingers mashing. With six other top riders to choose from and a bundle of courses and mad tricks, you might want to start sweet-talking Santa.

ATLANTIS: THE LOST EMPIRE

Atlantis looks nice, hope it plays good

Exploring Atlantis's 18 levels, you'll come across all manner of obstacles, including sea creatures and volcanoes. It's mostly a 2D platformer, but with a bit of vehicle-based action. Hopefully it won't fall into the trap of trying to be two games at the same time and succeeding in neither.

STUART LITTLE: THE JOURNEY HOME



Tree-swinging, but Stu's no monkey

Based on the upcoming movie, you play Stuart the mouse who's very, erm, little. Spanning eight levels, you'll take on the perils of the Big Apple in a side-scrolling 2D platformer with some racing action, including a model boat race, a mini golf course, and a toy cowboy town. Out in September.

SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER

PLAYERS: **1-4**
OUT: **NOVEMBER**
DEVELOPER: **NATSUME**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION 02**

Pull a backside manual and carve across the icy surface of a steep ridge, then leap off into the unknown and make like a bird. Then string together some insane tricks to take you all the way down an obstacle-ridden mountain. Snowboarding action grinds on to Advance later this year, and there's only one man for the job...

X-RATED

He's a punk rocker, a four-time World champion snowboarder, and he's out to steal Tony's extreme sports crown. Meet Shaun Palmer, the iceman of cool, and Activision's newest hardcore sporting hero.

Press Start and you'll immediately be faced with the challenge of skilfully ripping your way through trick-packed freestyle competitions and boardercross races to try and build a pro career as one of five top-class riders. And as you tackle the 16 awesome-looking courses, you'll be forced to pounce over train lifts, slide across dangerously thin ice bridges, and hit the skies with some mega half-pipe action.

TOTALLY BODACIOUS

Like Tony Hawk's 2 on GBA, the viewpoint in Shaun Palmer's uses a fixed isometric camera angle that looks down on the player, and although it takes a little while to get used to, once you do, popping tricks comes as naturally as breathing air.

There are shedloads of grabs, spins, grinds and manuals to link together and master, but where the fun could really come alive is in the multiplayer mode. Where Tony's first Advance game's biggest shortcoming was the solo-only play, Shaun's making no such mistakes – you can link up and thrash about with three of your mates. Natsume is keeping details on what modes of play will be available under very strict wraps, but race and trick modes are no-brainer guesses.

Looks like Activision's going to milk its fab Tony Hawk GBngin

Is snowboarding cooler than skateboarding?

It's certy m

CVG RECKONS

Class-A snowboarding games are rare, but this just might become the handheld equivalent of SSX on PS2. And with a four-player option, things are looking hot for the iceman's debut on GBA.

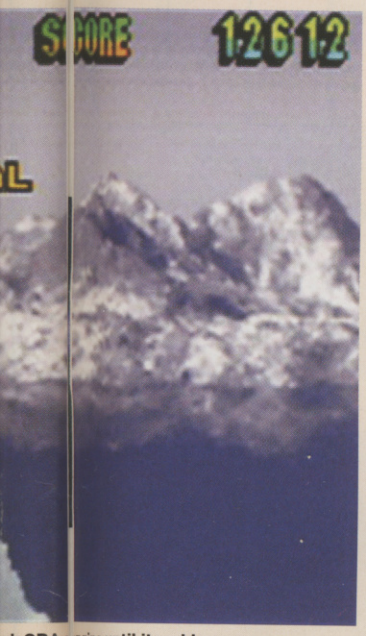
"There are shedloads of spins, grinds and mana together and mate

ADVANCE TO GO

Thumbs twitching uncontrollably when you're standing in the bus queue? Getting sudden urges to rip up your potted plants hoping to find giant turnips hidden beneath? You've caught a nasty dose of Advance fever. Never mind, CVG's doctors are on hand with a competition to make you feel better about being a hopeless handheld addict.

You've all seen the Big N's Advance adverts about handheld nuts getting caught up playing GBA. If you haven't, you've probably been too busy actually playing GBA to notice the real world. Then this is the compo for you. Simply send us photographic proof of your Advance addiction and the best entry wins a cool prize. Playing Castlevania while holidaying at the pyramids in Egypt or Tony Hawking at the top of Mount Snowdon – photograph it all and send it in to us.

Getting arrested on a plane for accidentally blurting out, "I'm loaded with bombs and now you all die!" while playing Bomberman Tournie will give us a cheap laugh, but you won't get a prize. Keep it legal. Keep it smart (just remember what happened after everyone took those Tango ads too far). Entries to the usual address marked 'Advance To Go'. And no, we can't return submitted pictures.



wk GBA engine until its udders are sore

t's certainly more dangerous. Don't fall off!

ds of grabs,
anuals to link
master"

PLAYERS: **4**
OUT: **Q4**
DEVELOPER: **SONIC TEAM**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG ADVANCE

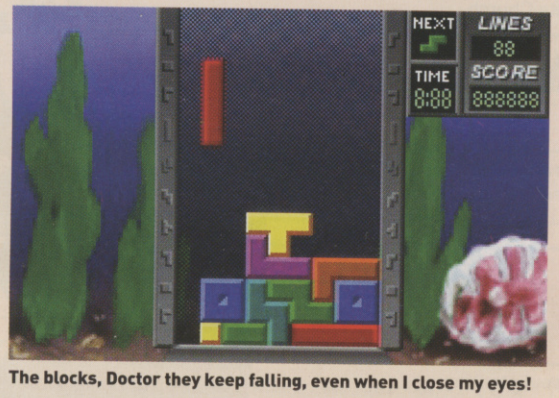
Sparks fly as Tails tries to stop

Knuckles soars through the air

When it comes to blazing through platforms so fast that your eyes bleed, you know that there can only be one fella for the job, Sonic. Having stamped his mark on Sega's consoles and the NeoGeo Pocket Color, Sonic Team are taking the blue fella to the next logical step – Advance.

GREASED LIGHTNING

Keeping the action fixed in the 2D retro style, this version sees Sonic and chums bolting through loads of new levels, grinding along stuff like in Sonic 2. You can play as Knuckles, Tails or Amy too. But one of the greatest thrills will be multiplayer. It's still unconfirmed as to the kind of four-way mania we can expect, but the grapevine vibes are very good.



The blocks, Doctor they keep falling, even when I close my eyes!

TETRIS WORLDS

PLAYERS: **4**
OUT: **Q4**
DEVELOPER: **TETRIS CO**
PUBLISHER: **THQ**

A dozen years on from the release of the original Tetris on Game Boy and it's hard to say a bad word about it. It was a triumph of gameplay over graphics, and it's only fair that the GBA should receive a version of that genius classic.

ON THE BLOCK

There's not much you can change about Tetris to make it any better – just look at The Next Tetris on PSone for proof. Luckily, it seems that in Tetris Worlds there aren't too many drastic changes from the 1989 masterpiece, just seven single-player modes of play and a four-way multiplay option.

CVG'S HANDHELD CHART

So you're the proud new owner of a GBA. The remainder of your cash is burning a hole in your pocket and you wanna know how best to spend it right this very second. But you also want to know what the future holds, and have misplaced your crystal ball. Never fear, we're here to help. Below is a list of the Top 10 essential games available at the moment, and a Top 10 list of games that are coming our way on GBA and making CVG go all weak at the knees.

TOP 10 MUST-HAVE GBA TITLES

1. Tony Hawk's 2
2. Castlevania
3. Bomberman Tournament
4. Mario Advance
5. Konami Krazy Racers
6. Rayman Advance
7. Kuru Kuru Kururin
8. F-Zero
9. Back Track
10. Hot Potato!

Tony Hawk's 2 sets the standard for handheld extreme sports games

TOP 10 FUTURE RELEASES

1. Mario Kart: Super Circuit
2. Tony Hawk's 3
3. Wario Land
4. Sonic Advance
5. Street Fighter 2
6. Gradius Generation
7. Mr Driller 2
8. Sabrewulf
9. Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder
10. ChuChu Rocket!

You know you want it. Check our playtest this issue and get saving

CVG Trailb

The National Lottery is Stupid Tax; the more stupid you are, the more you pay. CVG Trailblazer is the only compo you need

START HERE

If you thought last month's mega GBA giveaway was hot, cast your greedy eyes over this hog's feast of gaming gluttony. This time around GBA owners can try their luck for copies of Mario Advance, Kuru Kuru Kururin, Fire Pro Wrestling, Hot Potato!, Ready 2 Rumble Round 2 and even four GBAs themselves. And as for PS2 players, we've got copies of MTV Music Generator 2, Onimusha, City Crisis, and GT3. Just answer all the questions, fill in the form and send it to the usual address. Each prize is drawn for separately but to qualify for each one, you have to get the answer for the previous questions right as well. So to have a chance for those top prizes, make sure you get the easy questions right too.

7th MARIO ADVANCE AND KURU KURU KURURIN

COURTESY OF **NINTENDO**

Get turnip chucking with Nintendo's famous little plumber in Mario Advance, and steer a stick-like spaceship to safety in Kuru Kuru Kururin.

Q. Mario Advance is a version of which previous Mario title?

A. Super Mario World **B.** Super Mario 64 **C.** Super Mario Bros 2 **D.** Super Mario Bros 3

6th MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2

COURTESY OF **CODEMASTERS**

Become the lord of beats and compose some booty-shaking tracks, then dance around the room like a lunatic revelling in your own musical genius.

Q. Which of these music bods is not featured in MTV Music Generator 2?

A. Gorillaz **B.** Photec **C.** Funkmaster Flex **D.** Charlotte Church

5th FIRE PRO WRESTLING AND HOT POTATO!

COURTESY OF **BAM! ENTERTAINMENT**

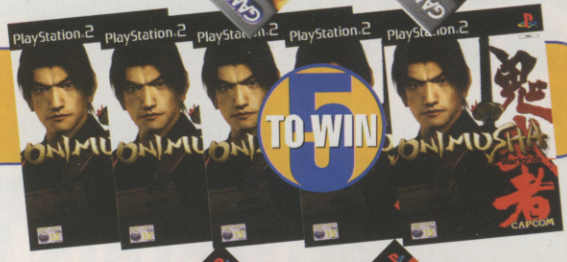
Get body slamming and vegetable shuffling in this crazy double giveaway.

Q. Which cool option can be found in Fire Pro Wrestling?

A. Create-A-Wrestler **B.** Create-A-Ring **C.** Create-A-Venue **D.** Create-A-Move

4th ONIMUSHA

COURTESY OF **CAPCOM**



If you're up for saving a princess, delving in a bit of soul stealing, and slicing and dicing some undead ass, you'll want to win a copy of Onimusha.

Q. What is the name of the expert samurai you control in Onimusha?

A. Samanosuke **B.** Salmonosoupe **C.** Simonsuzuki **D.** Samansoputi

3rd CITY CRISIS

COURTESY OF **TAKE 2**

Natural disasters, towering infernos, stranded chicks! Push your heroic talents to the max!

Q. In last month's review of City Crisis, we explained that there are two Chase missions in the game. But what do you get to chase?

A. A hijacked bus and a runaway sports car **B.** A hijacked sports car and a runaway bus
C. A hijacked plane and a runaway train **D.** A stolen ice-cream van and a hijacked hot-air balloon

2nd GRAN TURISMO 3

COURTESY OF **SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT**

Experience the thrill of grinding through dirt tracks and dust clouds in the daddy of all driving games. GT3 blows all other racers well and truly off the course.

Q. How many British cars are available at the beginning of the game?

A. 3 **B.** 4 **C.** 5 **D.** 6

lazer!

FINISH HERE

GBA KNOCKOUT

TO WIN 4

GAME BOY ADVANCE AND READY 2 RUMBLE ROUND 2

CORR!-TESY OF **MIDWAY**

Get your gloves on and slap on the Vaseline, because this GBA giveaway will have you fighting your way down the street to post your entry form for CVG Trailblazer.

As well as a beautiful little GBA, four incredibly lucky winners will receive a copy of the fist-swinging fighter Ready 2 Rumble Round 2. So get ready to go crazy in the four-cornered ring with a bunch of misfit madcap boxers. Kerpow!

In Ready 2 Rumble Round 2, what is the name of the boxing announcer?

A Michael Corleone
B Michael Knight
C Michael Buffer
D Michael Cooper

COMPETITION

GO ON-WIN IT

Fill in this coupon, tick the correct answers and send it to:

I Want To Be A CVGillionaire! 238, Computer and Video Games, 30 Cleveland St, London, W1P 5FF

Mario Advance and Kuru Kuru Kururin
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

MTV Music Generator 2
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

Fire Pro Wrestling and Hot Potato!
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

Onimusha
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

City Crisis
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

Gran Turismo 3
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

GBA Knockout
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

Enter your details below

Name:

Age:

Address:

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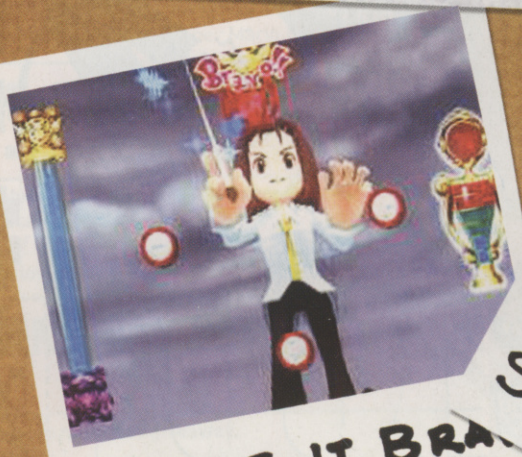
Terms and conditions: Only entries with all of the questions completed and received before **September 20** will be entered into the prize draw. Winners will be notified by post, so don't call, eh? No cash alternatives. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The editor's decision is final. And he's a decisive kind of guy. They don't call him 'Decisive Al' for nothing. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply.

CVG Insider

We go undercover to bring you tomorrow's big games

KINGDOM HEARTS

WHAT IS IT: Kingdom Hearts
WHO'S RESPONSIBLE: Square
WHAT'S THE STORY: Square is working on a new RPG, and Britney Spears has decided she wants to go topless in her next video – two things that will make you drool but only one is true. Damn. The fathers of Final Fantasy have teamed up with Disney, and while the thought of Dumbo teaming up with big-eyed Japanese characters from Final Fantasy may not seem in the same league as seeing Britney's baps, most of the games-playing world will be salivating just as much. So what if Donald Duck and Goofy don't conjure up as exciting an image as Mario and Solid Snake – imagine an FF game with those guys in it and we bet you're interested – especially when you look at these screenshots and realise just how awesome it's gonna look. With FF10 selling millions of copies, and Disney movies among the most eagerly awaited anywhere, combining the two would seem like a dead-cert hit. Come on admit it, you wanna play it already, don't you?



SHAKE IT BRA

WHAT IS IT: Shake It Bravo
WHO'S RESPONSIBLE: Sony
WHAT'S THE STORY: Okay, as games genres go, conducting an orchestra would have to be right up there with conducting a bus or a train on a list of things that would never make a game you would want to play. Ever. Well, the theory is about to be tested, because Sony, in its infinite wisdom, is going to push the boundaries of rhythm action games with Shake It Bravo. Yep, you'll get the chance to conduct an orchestra using the controller buttons to regulate the tempo and rhythm instead of the poncy little stick most real conductors have to use. It also uses the analogue buttons – push them harder to make the music louder and softer to chill it out a bit. Sony claims to have 34 tunes in there, though we don't yet know if they will be traditional orchestral pieces, which would – let's be honest here – suck big time, or whether they may actually think about it a bit and stick some tunes in there you will actually know. We'll just have to wait and see.

SHAKE IT BRAVO

KINGDOM HEARTS

PROJECT GOTHAM

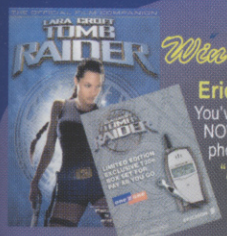
WHAT IS IT: Project Gotham Racing
WHO'S RESPONSIBLE: Bizarre Creations
WHAT'S THE STORY: It may look like it's going to be just another racing game, but this is being produced by the people behind Metropolis Street Racer, so you know it's going to look the business. Plus, it's also being done on Xbox, and if Uncle Billy's box can produce half what it promises then this could be mentioned in the same breath as GT3 when it comes to stand-out racing games... no, really.

Like MSR, there are accurately modelled places to race through (New York is finished already), but unlike MSR and even the great GT3, the cars in Project Gotham (it will be renamed before release) will take damage.

Yes sir, you will be able to take a nice shiny new Ferrari, wrap it around a lamp-post or two and actually see the results in the bodywork. It's highly unusual for car manufacturers to let games show their cars getting messed up. With this and Burn-Out from Acclaim on the way, it looks like you'd better pull on the driving gloves for a new era of hyper-realistic racers.

WICKED PRIZES

Win Lara Croft's Phone



Ericsson T-20 + Tomb Raider Goodies.

You've seen the movie and played the game! NOW try to win this great prize of an Ericsson T-20 phone just like hers, plus loads of other Tomb Raider Goodies!

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PRIZE BUSTER

THE HIGHER THE SCORE THE BIGGER THE PRIZE!

Start winning at 30 points - with major prizes starting at 50 points . Prizes include PSone Games,, Video Players, PlayStation 2's, Mobile Phones, Nintendos, Colour TV's and a top prize of a Pentium 4 computer.

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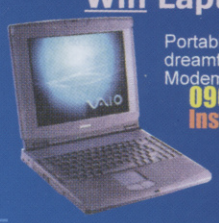

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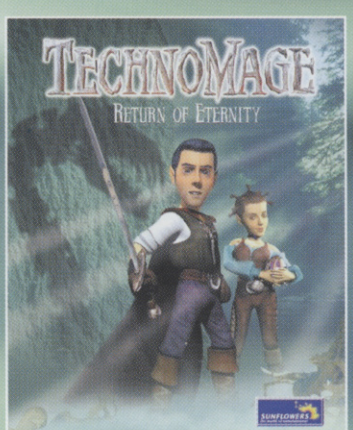

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